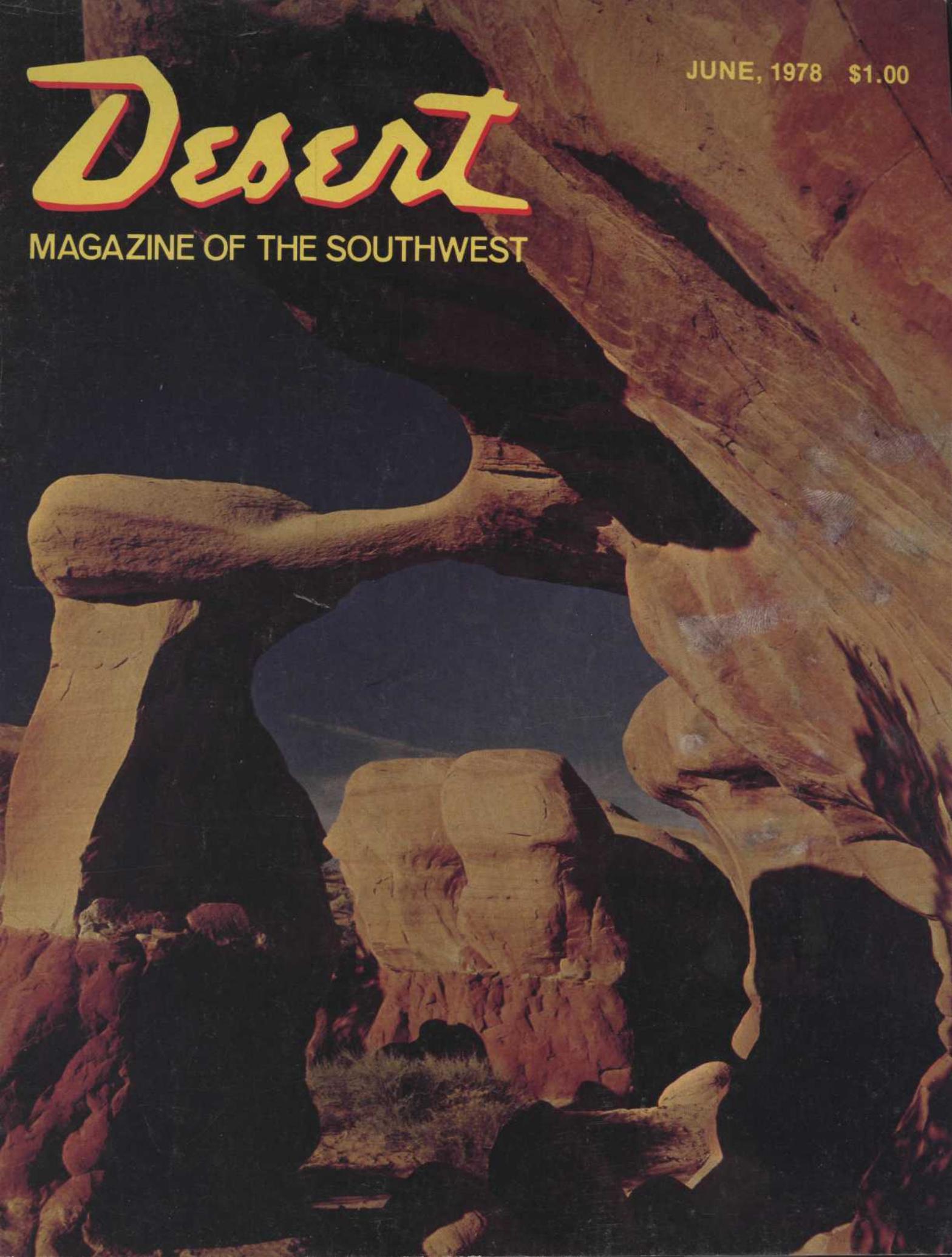


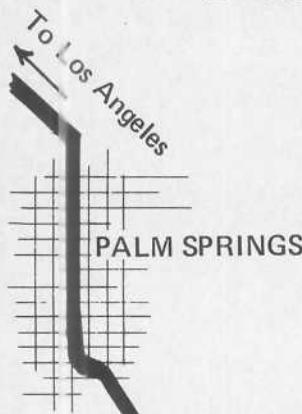
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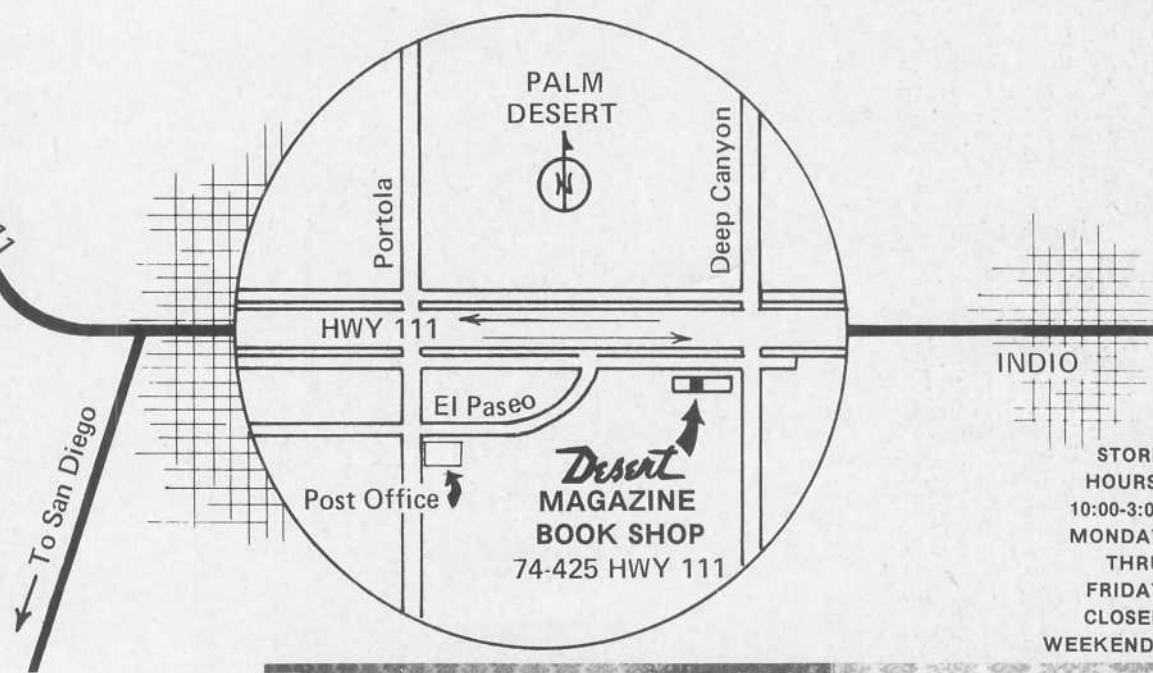
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THE COVER:
One of the unique sandstone forms, Metate Arch, in the Devil's Garden, Escalante Canyon, Utah. Photo by David Muench, Santa Barbara, California.

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POLARIZATION SEEKS to be the inevitable result of the current desert-use planning program of the U. S. Bureau of Land Management, despite news reports showing cooperation and mutual understanding emanating from meetings of the California Desert Conservation Area Advisory Committee.

The maneuvering room for those of us here at *Desert* and others who see themselves as the majority in the middle between the conservationists and the full-use fraternity appears to be getting tighter each month.

For example, we drive a four-wheeler every day, to work and to the store and for the bit of recreation our tight deadlines permit. We have prided ourselves on keeping a clear windshield and not descending into the name-calling and the hysteria at the two poles. There is room in the great American desert right outside our door for all of us to co-exist, admittedly by having to give a little here and there. After all, even Sierra Club members drive four-wheelers and even a few off-roaders have doctoral degrees.

But now, we learn that the U. S. Bureau of Land Management is altering the English language, or at least the every-day usage we all grew up with. A road is no longer what we thought it was, an organized way to go. Not necessarily well-graded, paved or bisected with a neat, broken yellow line, but well defined, frequently used and generally agreed to be: a road.

No longer, according to the May issue of B.L.M. *NEWSBEAT*, the agency's monthly California news broadside, a good place, incidentally, to learn what the feds are up to. In a discussion of the current wilderness review, covering all tracts of federal land of 5,000 acres or more, the public affairs chief, Jerry Harrell, says a road is:

"An access route which has been improved and maintained by using hard or power machinery or tools to insure relatively regular and continuous use. A way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road."

Other federal, state and local agencies may be quick to seize on this handy-dandy definition. Many historical routes to old mines, washes, passes or even trails pioneered by stage coaches, freight wagons, let alone jeeps or sand buggies thus no longer have the protection of a defined roadway. Hence, land use classifications based on the definition of a road become more restricted.

Trails and routes used in national parks, monuments and forests, state parks and recreation areas, county and district parks and elsewhere are subject to a new interpretation. Hence they may be closed and access denied.

Now, those of us at *Desert* are still not adversaries, have not been since the beginning in 1937, seeing as how there are enough of those, the adversaries, all around. We are endeavoring to remain neutral observers and we hope many more of you out there are doing the same.

But, a few more arbitrary definitions without benefit of public discussion, let alone legal hearings or even a conference among carefully selected proponents of varying point of view, and many of us might waver.

After all, suppose next time they want to re-define "recreation," or "public use," or even "off-road vehicular use." Shades of George Orwell!

William Kuykendall

The Man Who Captured Sunshine

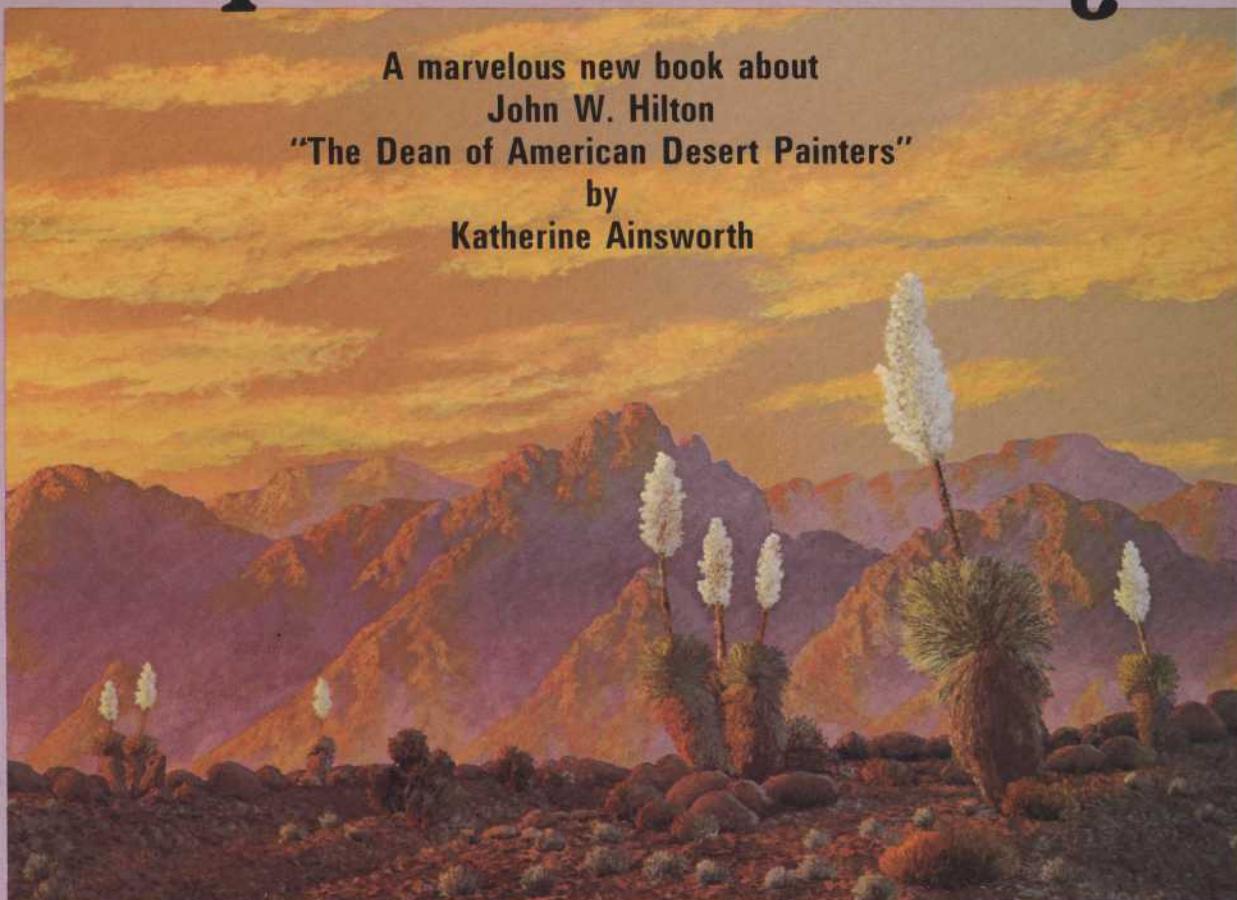
A marvelous new book about

John W. Hilton

"The Dean of American Desert Painters"

by

Katherine Ainsworth



Just one of the many beautifully reproduced Hilton paintings included in the book.

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The Man Who Captured Sunshine is inspirational . . . a book which inspires one to overcome adversity, to achieve excellence, to strive for a genuine joy of living. The reader will cry, but more often will find himself/herself enjoying the pleasure of hearty laughter, of grand adventure. The significance of this book, above all else, lies in an impelling force which inspires the reader to live a fuller, more meaningful, more joyous life . . . to be a doer, a creator, a giver.

The author, Katherine Ainsworth, makes no apology for the "lack of objectivity" in writing this book . . . she has been a friend and admirer of John Hilton for over thirty years. Katie's late husband, Ed Ainsworth, was John Hilton's best friend for almost as many years. This "labor of love" has resulted in a magnificent book about a magnificent man.

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CALIFORNIA II
Photography by David Muench
Text by Don Pike

California II is an exceptional book; exceptional because of its great beauty and because of its presentation of an almost pristine wonderland of nature.

In his text, Pike quotes from the early Spanish author Ordóñez de Montalvo, who wrote in his imaginary novel around 1510: "at the right hand of the Indies there is an island called California, very near to the Terrestrial Paradise." If Ordóñez had been able to view the photographs in *California II*, he might well have written that it is the terrestrial paradise, for through the camera art of David Muench everything becomes beautiful.

California is one of the most populous of states, yet the few pictures which give indication of the great cities are intriguing photographic renderings in pattern, light and color. Through the lens of Muench's camera, long streets of homes become stacked structural rows, building up to the distant skyscrapers of downtown San Francisco; from Coronado, the skyline of San Diego appears on the horizon almost as a remote mirage; and the dense freeway traffic of Los Angeles is transformed into bright lines of red and white against the velvety dark-

ness of night and the shadowy forms of far-off office buildings.

The few people who are featured are dwarfed by the world of nature around them.

David Muench is undoubtedly one of the world's most perceptive landscape and nature photographers, and *California II* displays some of his finest work. He has seemingly traveled to every part of the state, in every season discovering unique moments of beauty from pre-dawn to late night. He has photographed dawn coloring the more than 14,000-foot-high peak of Mount Whitney, sunrise reflecting Telescope Peak in a pool at Badwater 280 feet below sea level, and floodlights illuminating the State Capitol Building at night.

Charles H. Belding, publisher of the Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company, has worked with David in producing other memorable books, including the original *California*, *Timberline Ancients*, *New Mexico*, *Utah* and *Rocky Mountains*. In *California II*, their efforts have resulted in a magnificent panorama of the state, inspiring both natives and newcomers with an appreciation of the beauties of this golden land.

Large format, Hardcover, 165 full color illustrations, 192 pages, \$27.50.



CACTUS IDENTIFIER
including succulent plants
By Helmut Bechtel

This gem of a little book contains 119 beautiful color photographs of cacti and succulent plants, plus showing their exquisite flowers in full color. A perfect reference, it will answer all questions regarding the numerous succulents available, which are best suited for your climate, when to water and when not to, how and what to feed them, how to deal with diseases and pests and what kind of pots and soil to plant them in.

The unusual shapes of the cacti and

other succulents are reason enough for cultivating them, but in addition, many of them, especially cacti, produce lovely blossoms which rival other house-plant flowers in beauty.

Mr. Bechtel gives us the scientific name of each plant, as well as the popular name, a detailed description of each, where they are to be found, and how to care for them.

Although a small format, this hard-cover book contains 256 pages of informative reading, plus the beautiful photographs. \$4.95.



EDIBLE AND USEFUL
PLANTS OF CALIFORNIA
By Charlotte Bringle Clarke

Both American Indians and the pioneers knew and used many different plant species—for food, fibers, medicine, tools and other purposes. This unique book is a guide to identifying more than 220 such plants. But it goes much further—it also tells the reader how to prepare, cook and otherwise use them. Some of the dishes for which recipes are given have won culinary prizes. All have been tested not only by the author but also by her students and by journalists—who have been uniformly surprised and impressed.

The plants are organized by habitat communities. Descriptions, photos, drawings and distribution information are given. Where poisonous look-alikes exist, they too are illustrated. Fascinating information about Indian uses of native and introduced species is included.

The author emphasizes conservation considerations; the aim of the book is to educate the reader about intriguing uses of the plants, and to tell how to gather and use the palatable and abundant species without damaging the environment.

Hardcover, contains an extensive cross-reference and glossary, profusely illustrated, 280 pages, \$10.95.

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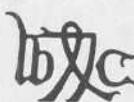
by Sessions S. Wheeler

The unknown people who, thousands of years ago, lived beside a large lake and left behind puzzling evidences of their cultures; the first white explorers; the forty-niners who followed Lassen's "Death Route"; the desert's vicious Indian war; lost mines; and the history of the basin's big ranches are included in the fascinating story of an unusual part of our earth, Nevada's Black Rock Desert.

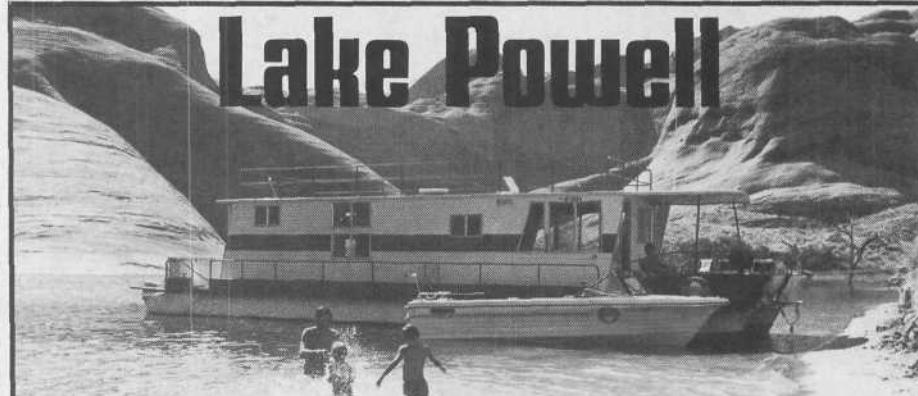
"Buck" Wheeler is widely known as an authority on Nevada history and geology.

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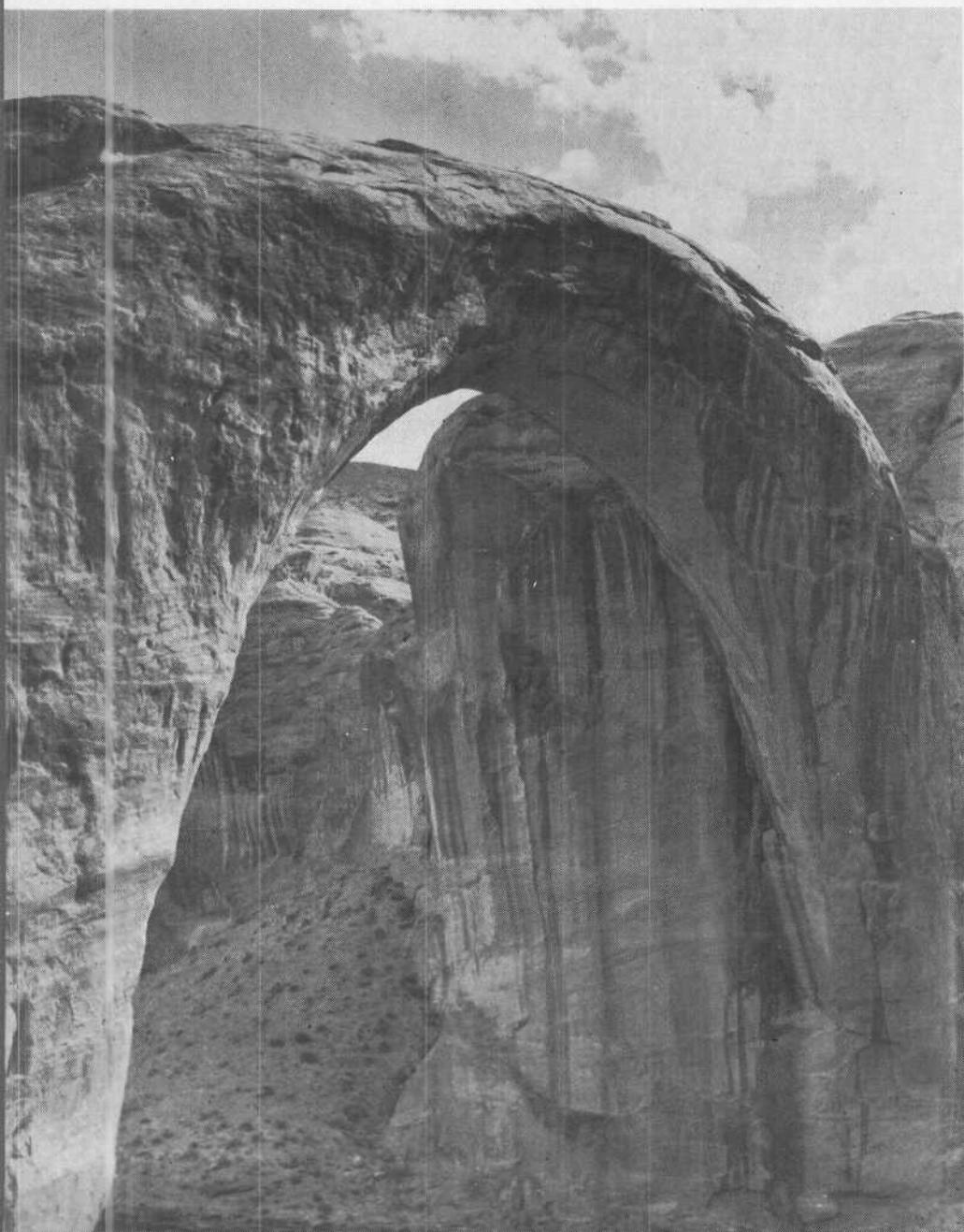
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NONNEZOSHE... THE RAINBOW OF STONE

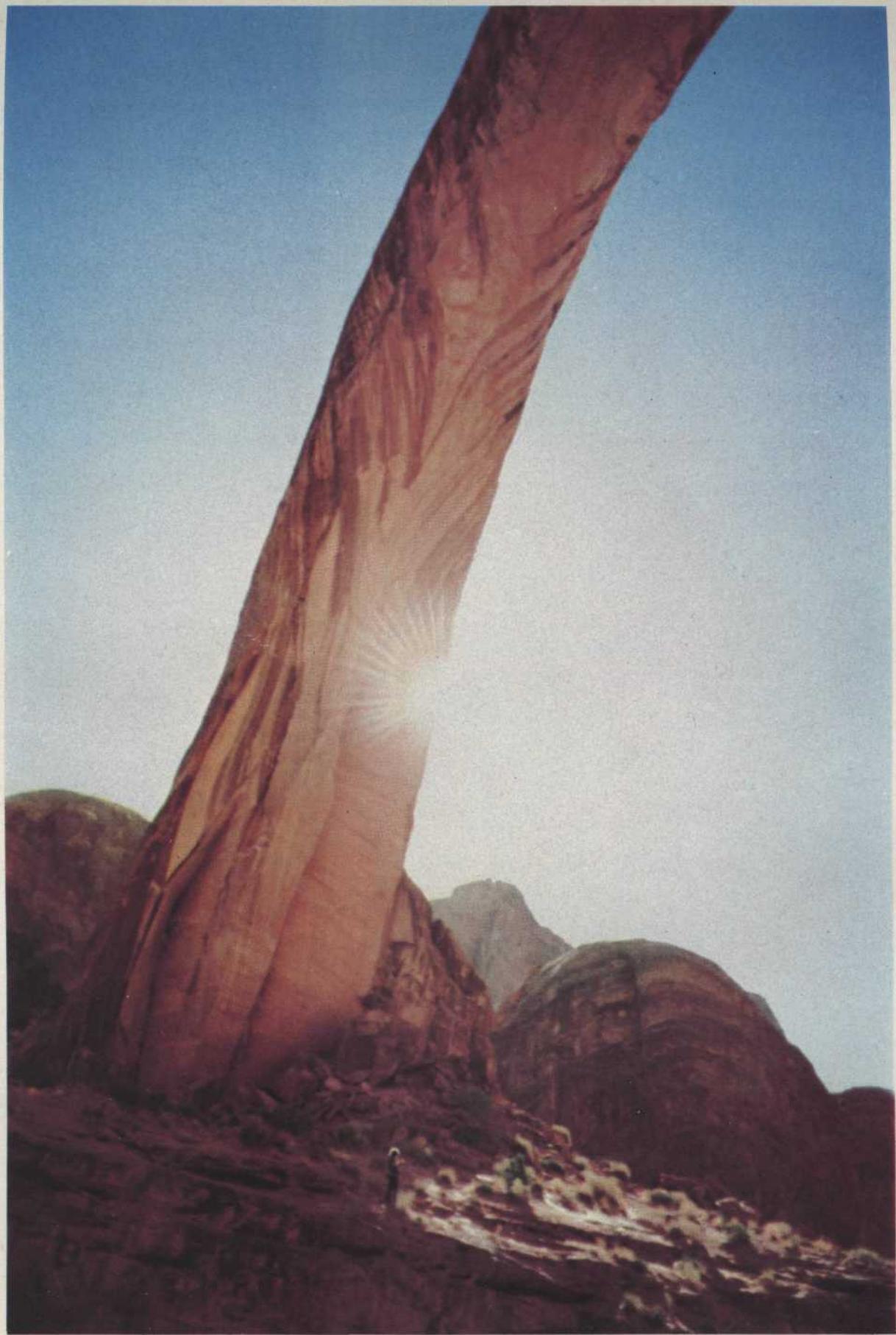
by NEAL MATTHEWS



IN A HOT August day in 1909, Indian trader John Wetherill rode his horse at a gallop up to the base of the Rainbow Bridge in Southern Utah, and thus became the first white man to reach the legendary "Nonnezoshe." History has penned in his name as the official discoverer of the largest and most beautiful natural arch in the world, an arch the Indians had worshipped for centuries. It was a sweet victory for Wetherill, because it marked the end of years of fruitless searching, and the bridge itself was even more spectacular than the Indians had made it out to be.

The long road to Nonnezoshe, Navajo for "rainbow of stone" and/or "path of the sun," began before the 20th century was five years old. John Wetherill and his wife Louisa, whom the Indians called Astan Zoche, "little slender woman," ran a trading post at Olijato, Arizona. It also served as a starting point from which expeditions, usually led by Wetherill, would begin their treks into the Southwestern desert. Mrs. Wetherill, who like her husband was intensely interested in Indian culture, first heard of the "Rock Rainbow that Spans the Canyon" from the One-Eyed Man of the Salt Clan.

This old, wrinkled Navajo had just returned from the White Canyon National Bridges, now known as Natural Bridges National Monument. He had been sent there by the Wetherills to guide a party of white men. He was perplexed as to why the men wanted to make such a difficult journey just to see rocks. Astan



Color photo by author.

Zoche told him that there was nothing like those strange stone bridges anywhere else in the world.

"They are not the only bridges in the world," said the One-Eyed Man of the Salt Clan. "We have better one in this country."

"Where is there a better one in this country?" asked Astan Zoche.

"It is back of Navajo Mountain. Only a few go there. They do not know the prayers. They used to go there for ceremonies, but the old men who knew the prayers are gone. I have horses in that country and I have seen the bridge."

A few months after this conversation with Mrs. Wetherill, the One-Eyed Man of the Salt Clan died. The following spring Clyde Colville, one of Wetherill's partners, and an Indian named Luke, conducted the first bona fide search for Nonnezoshe. They climbed to the top of Navajo Mountain after losing the trail in the rocks on the other side of Beaver Creek. They did not see the bridge, which lies just four miles to the Northwest, and were forced to return defeated.

In the years to follow there were many more attempts to find the Rock Rainbow that Spans the Canyon, most of them led by Wetherill. The forays for Nonnezoshe

were usually a minor objective of the numerous archaeological expeditions that he guided in search of ancient ruins. He was a man of the desert, a brother to the Indians, and an explorer who loved leaving his boot print where no man's had been before.

In August of 1909 Dr. Byron Cummings, an archaeologist from the University of Utah, brought some of his students into the Navajo country and enlisted the services of John Wetherill as a guide. The two had worked together in the past and had become friends. They decided to look for Nonnezoshe as an adjunct to the search for ruins.

A surveyor for the General Land Office named William Douglass was in the area at the same time under orders from the Department of Interior to try to find the purported stone bridge. Douglass and Cummings did not extend to one another the fondness and respect each held for Wetherill. They had had differences over jurisdiction and excavation rights of the Indian ruins. Wetherill knew that Douglass' presence threatened to put an end to some important diggings that were being conducted by Cummings, so in an effort to settle the dispute he suggested that the two parties merge for the search. He reasoned that if Cummings

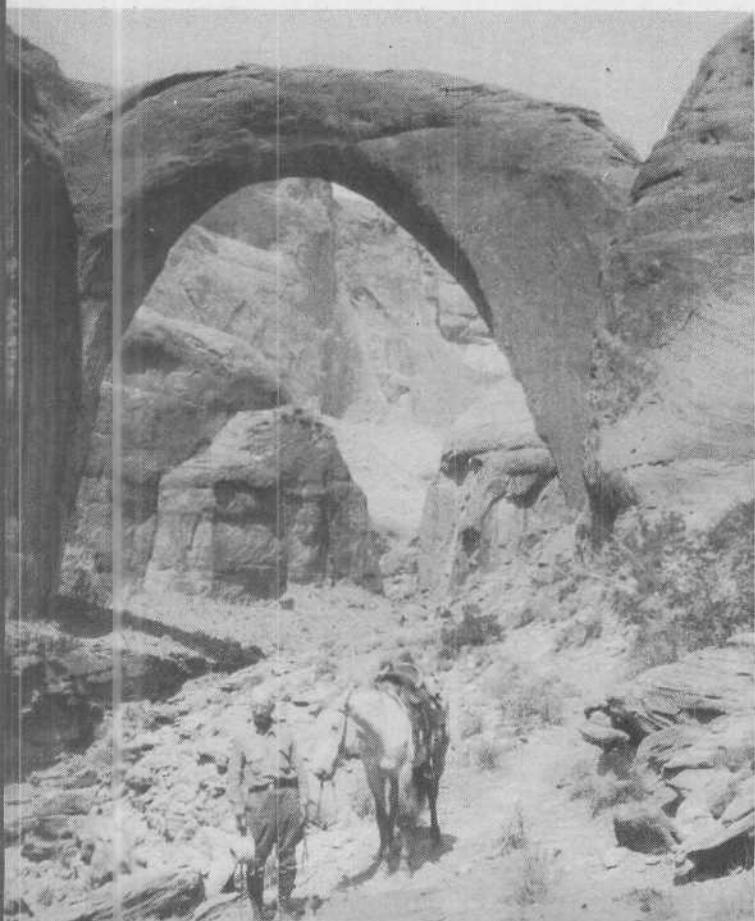
and Douglass could travel together each would gain a better understanding of the other and their differences might be worked out.

The party of 12 men and nearly 30 animals started out into the land of red domes and box canyons on a positive note. Mrs. Wetherill had just talked to a Paiute named Nasja-begay who said he had been to the arch just a few days before. Because he was a Paiute he did not fear to go to Nonnezoshe, and he agreed to meet the expedition at Paiute Canyon and guide them to it.

As the small bevy of men and horses and mules crept over solid mountains of rock where not another living thing could be seen, and where their two young Indian guides said no white man's pony could go, Wetherill felt assured that this time he would find the great stone arch. But the Indians had not been beyond Bald Rocks, and they became lost. Wetherill refused to turn back, and led the party in the direction he thought they should go. They missed Paiute Canyon but Nasja-begay managed to track down the exhausted bunch of explorers. He guided them the short distance into Bridge Canyon.

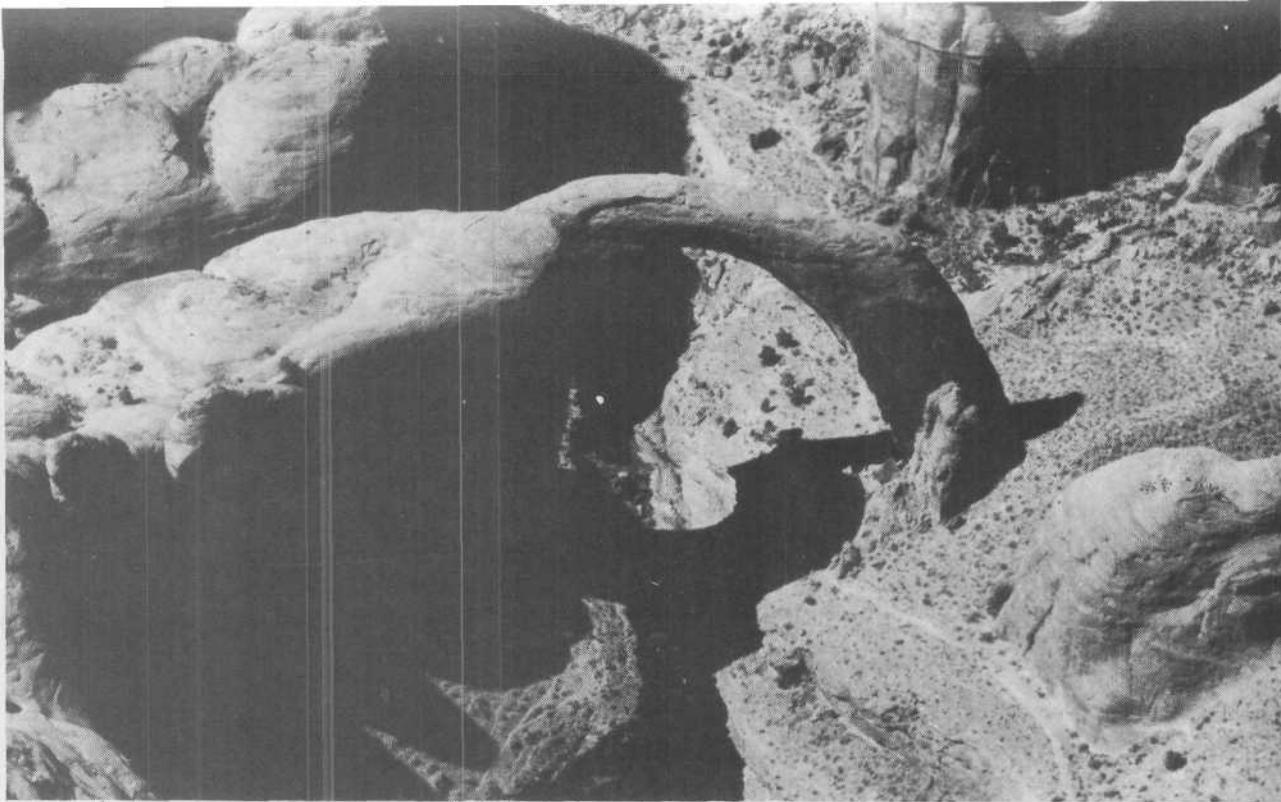
Nasja-begay led the struggling horses and men past gigantic overhanging caves and across slippery, desert-polished ledges where unshod hooves slid and horses went lame. The journey required two horses per man. Left and right down the meandering canyon the confident Indian took the white men, until he reached a sharp bend to the left where he stopped the bedraggled group of cowboys, scientists and surveyors. He passed word to Wetherill that the Rock Rainbow that Spans the Canyon lay in view just around the bend.

Naturally there was rivalry among Douglass, Cummings and Wetherill as to who would be the first to look upon the legendary bridge, and after a discussion that is unfortunately lost to history it was decided that Cummings would go on ahead and view it. When Douglass came around close behind him and spotted the arch, he rode on past Cummings, on his way to being the first white man to reach the Rainbow Bridge. John Wetherill, always the peace keeper, saw that if one preceded the other to Nonnezoshe, the last one would lose all credit and their already strained relations would become that much worse.



Dr. Cummings
at Rainbow
Bridge in 1936.

Rainbow Bridge is as impressive from the air as it is from the ground.



So Wetherill kicked his horse, shot past Cummings and Douglass, and consigned himself to the honor of being the first white man to reach Nonnezoshe.

But aside from the technicalities of who got to where first, what exactly did Cummings see when he came around that last crook in the canyon? Leave it to Zane Grey, our most eminent writer of western novels, who in the spring of 1913 was the first artist to see the bridge, to describe what waited so many eons in the silent heat of the desert:

"But this thing was glorious. It absolutely silenced me . . . This Rainbow Bridge was the one great natural phenomenon . . . which I had ever seen that did not at first give vague disappointment . . . a disenchantment of contrast with what the mind had conceived . . . I had a strange, mystic perception that this rosey-hued, tremendous arch of stone was a goal I had failed to reach in some former life, but had now found. Here was a rainbow magnified even beyond dreams, a thing not transparent and ethereal, but solidified, a work of ages, sweeping up majestically from the red walls, its iris-hued arch against the blue sky."

As the rest of Wetherill's party approached the bridge and began to ride beneath it in order to set up camp on the other side, Nasja-begay stopped. He stood still and silent, near the ruins of an ancient altar built by his ancestors,

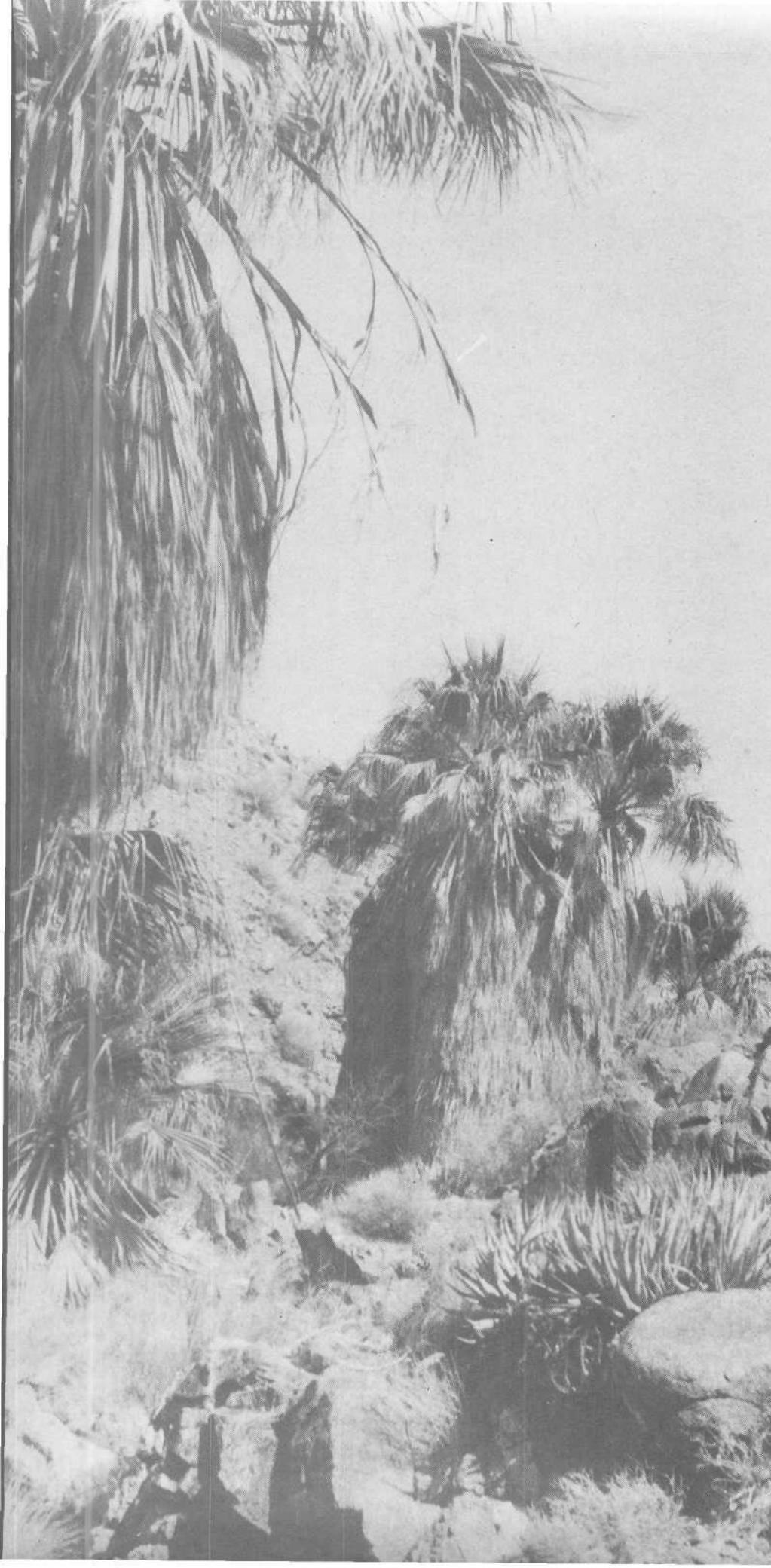
saying his prayers to the great stone rainbow. Then, to the surprise of the white men, he began to climb up the steep slope out of the dry creek bed and walk around the right abutment of the bridge. In all the later trips he made there with Wetherill, the Indian never once walked beneath the arch.

In order to ensure the protection and preservation of Rainbow Bridge, President Taft on May 30, 1910, proclaimed it a National Monument. At the time it was widely believed that only a hardy few would ever have the privilege of seeing Rainbow Bridge. The men who had sweated and toiled on the trail to Nonnezoshe thought that people were always going to have to earn the honor of looking upon such a magnificent spectacle, just as they did. But something as beautiful as that arc of stone could not stay tucked away forever, and eventually a trail was established from the Colorado River that meandered through Forbidden Canyon and turned up into Bridge Canyon at their junction. A Jeep trail also was cut, but neither of these routes brought in anywhere near the amount of people who visit the monument these days.

With the completion of the Glen Canyon Dam and the resulting creation of colossal Lake Powell in 1963, Rainbow Bridge has become accessible to anyone who can get a boat onto the lake. Today, part of the land that forms the perimeter around Rainbow Bridge National Monu-

ment is under water. Boaters can ease up into Forbidden Canyon and leave a wake 300 feet above the old trail to Rainbow. They can land at a dock that is within sight of the bridge, and as many as 30,000 people a year walk up the short distance to the foot of Nonnezoshe.

So now, 69 years after John Wetherill stood beneath the Rock Rainbow that spans the Canyon for the first time, and looked up to see the solid crescent of stone blotting out the sun, his descendants need to walk only one-fourth of a mile to stand in the same place. The silence of that place seems to hold secrets, for it is not an easy silence. As you walk in the soft sand below the towering span of sandstone, high enough to stand a football field on end beneath it with room to spare, the air and silence seem to conspire into a pressurized unit. A force hovers in the area that renders words useless. When people do speak it is in low, muffled tones, as if they were in church. There is something very personal in the way the arch reaches up into the sky and plants an enormous foot 278 feet across the canyon. That appendage of rock seems to reach across time as well as space. It defies gravity, age, and in so doing touches people in a place that longs for eternity, freedom. There was a saying that began in 1909 when the first white man came back from Nonnezoshe, and it is as true now as it was then: No man returns from the Rainbow Bridge an atheist. □



Bear Canyon

LITTLE-KNOWN desert canyon with a Sierra Nevada-style name, just 15 miles from a freeway, has perhaps the best documented group of native palms in the Southern California desert but even so, relatively few people have even been there.

Bear Creek is a major drainage channel off Sheep Mountain in the Santa Rosa range, reached by a three-mile trail from La Quinta. The trail has existed since the early 1920s, perhaps longer, and the three-part grove, containing more than 150 trees, is now part of the University of California's Philip L. Boyd Deep Canyon Desert Research Center.

Despite this closeness to civilization, plus the niceties of a relatively easy foot trail, Bear Creek is seldom visited, except by the researchers and palm enthusiasts and, most unfortunately, twice by arsonists in the past 50 years or so.

There doesn't seem to be any special reason for the regular census of Bear Creek, except that it was the penchant of the late Randall Henderson, founder and longtime editor of *Desert Magazine*, to count the palms of the many groves he visited, provided it was possible to do so. It's not as easy as it sounds, sort of like counting cattle during a stampede or sheep in a sandstorm. Confusing is the best one-word description.

Henderson first visited Bear Creek in

Randall Henderson's 1947 view of Bear Creek palms shows heavy beards on adult trees, a sign they had never burned during their long lifetime. Indian grinding holes are found in the foreground boulders, above the tiny spring that gives the grove life.

Creek Palms

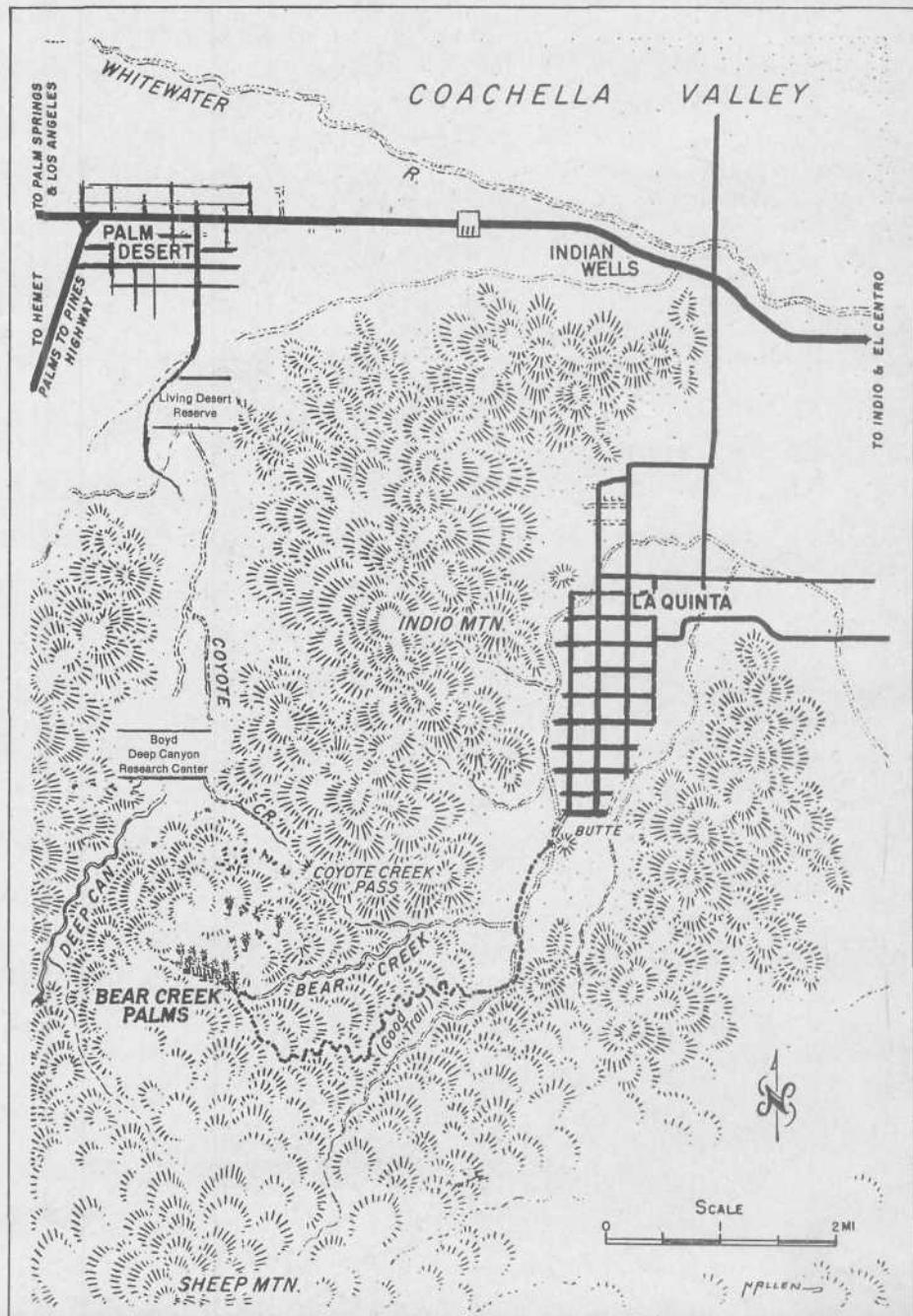
by BILL JENNINGS

1936 with a Sierra Club hiking party. They followed a steep but well-graded trail over several switchbacks from an elevation of approximately 600 feet to the oasis, at 2,300 feet. The trail dates to the original development of La Quinta in the early 1920s. The remains of a rock fireplace and picnic area at the end of the trail under a group of dead palms hints at its original purpose, to bring horsemen and hardy hikers to one of the best viewpoints overlooking the beautiful cove on the northeast edge of Sheep Mountain.

The trail still exists, although the heavy rains of the past two summers and the 1977-78 winter have rutted it badly. Motorcyclists have added to the damage at the lower end but fortunately gave up when they reached the switchbacks.

Arsonists had visited Bear Creek some time prior to Henderson's first tree-count. He found 11 mature trees with burned skirts and scarred trunks, but perhaps these had been scorched by lightning or Indians seeking the pack rats or other succulent small animals that make their homes in the dead fronds.

But there was no doubt about the second fire. In mid-afternoon on March 18, 1973, La Quinta residents reported to the state division of forestry that a smoke plume was rising out of the side of Sheep Mountain. A foot crew reached the scene



The Bear Creek trail is still well-preserved where flooding has not rutted it. This view to the east shows the Orocopia Mountains across the Coachella Valley.

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Looking up Bear Creek canyon, the palms are difficult to spot from a distance. Peak of 5,500-foot Sheep Mountain is off to the left.

to determine that someone had set fire to the middle section of the little grove of palms, then numbering about 200 trees, from seedlings to 50-foot adults.

Fortunately, the fire burned out without reaching the upper grove or the dead group just down the canyon where the fire had burned previously, some time before 1936.

A Deep Canyon researcher visited Bear Creek the day after the 1973 fire. His initial assessment of damage was gloomy. He estimated 75 palms had burned and only three in the central section were untouched. But the zest for life in the *Washingtonia filifera*, California's only native desert palm, is often measured by fire scars. A trace of green remained deep in the crown of several of the trees. A second visit two years later indicated they were still alive and then came Hurricane Kathleen in September, 1976, followed by an above-normal wet winter, Hurricane Doreen in August, 1977, and another wet winter, which is still going on.

A 1974 visit, by this writer, also a Deep Canyon staff member, indicated the little grove high on the side of Sheep Mountain was making a vigorous comeback. In November of that year I found 118 living trees, many of them seedlings rising from the scorched undergrowth beneath the scarred adults in the central group. Several of the older trees had died. After all, the end of the 1944 drought had not come yet in 1974.

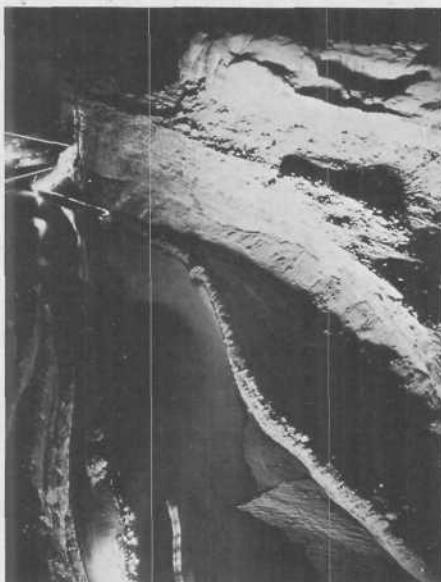
In February, 1978, I puffed over the spiny cholla terraces that separate Deep Canyon, Coyote Canyon and Bear Creek gorge, planning to return via the La Quinta trail. It was a rugged six-mile roundtrip for a 56-year-old former hiker, but I made it. I found that once again arsonists or anyone else had better not fool with Mother Nature. The Bear Creek oasis was alive with new growth, a short running stream and trembling on the edge of what turned out to be one of the greenest and most flower-filled springs

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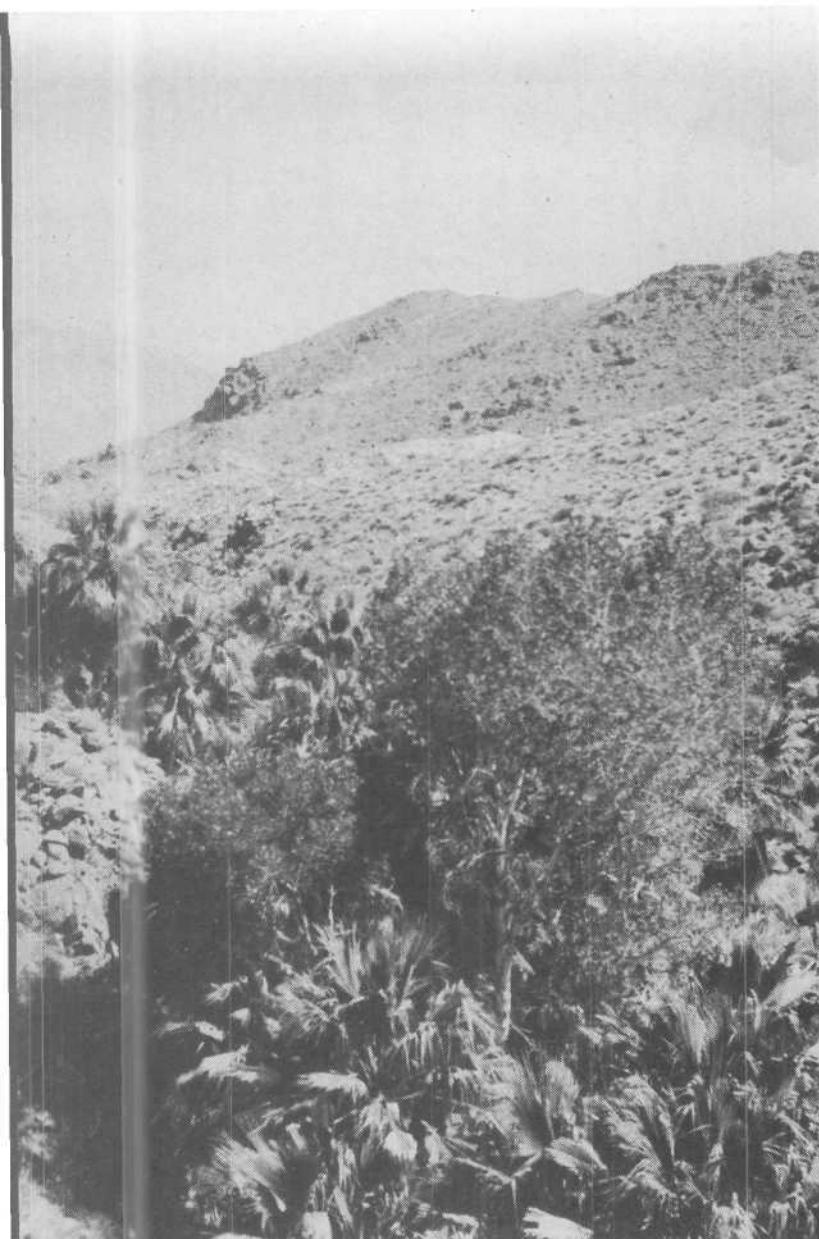
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A view from above Bear Creek palms, photographed by Randall Henderson in 1947, shows the group of native palm trees that then marked the spring in the middle of the oasis. In 1961 the cottonwoods were dead, and the trunks and stumps were gone by 1973.

in modern years.

There were 152 alive and healthy palms but no trace of the three cottonwood trees shading the old picnic area noted and photographed by Henderson both in 1936 and 1948.

Henderson's original count of 384 trees in 1936, swelled to a peak of 422 palms in 1948, had shrunk to 280 living trunks by 1961 and the nadir, three unburned trees in 1973. The following year I had counted 118 still struggling, and this year, Bear Creek's population has again risen to 152 and there may well be at least that many more seedlings trying to push up through the fire-blackened but rich soil.

All of this counting and classifying doesn't prove that Bear Creek is a special place for nurturing and preservation of desert fan palms. All it proves is that the huge natives, not even a tree by purists' standards perhaps, are tough,

resilient and respond quickly to any gratis moisture they receive.

One mystery Henderson touched on is still unsolved. He said, in a September, 1947 article in this magazine, "Oasis on Bear Creek," that the origin of the canyon's name was not clear, and invited readers to "throw additional light" on the name's origin. Nobody did, and the mystery of a Sierra name for a desert canyon remains.

Maybe the original pathfinder who laid out the trail in the 1920s was named Bear, or maybe a half-century before, sometime before hunters killed the last Santa Rosa-San Jacinto Mountains bear in Garner Valley, there had been a black-robed visitor, sort of a pre-television "Big Foot," spied in the rocky gorge off the north escarpment of Sheep Mountain. After all, they say there is a word for Bear in the Desert Cahuilla Indian language.

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ALONG THE OWLHOOT

ALL HE ever meant to do was to endure in the age-old struggle for survival of the fittest. Depending on how you look at it, it wasn't so different from our present automated society. Quite like us, he sought after the finest conveniences of livelihood by the shortest route and with the least possible expenditure of time and effort. For the most part, personal reputation or recognition was unimportant. He chose to avoid that. However wild and exploitative his deeds may have become, they probably were created for his own entertainment—as a savory seasoning for an otherwise unpalatable bland existence. Nor did he ever set out purposely to epitomize himself as the hallmark of his times.

The hard-living, fun-seeking Longrider of the Owlhoot Trail faded from the scene long ago, but the legends and traditions which he unintentionally scattered in his trail dust persist and expand with each telling. If his resurrection could be updated to our times, he would be astonished over the drama that his successors have woven around and about his times. He would, for example, discover that he had been a steely-eyed

gunfighter with his bloody reputation symbolized by the number of notches carved in his gun butt. Of course, he wouldn't remember his "infallible marksmanship with handgun or rifle," nor would he be likely to remember "the long row of corpses" of those who dared test his mettle. He would surely be confused by being labeled as a "cold blooded killer" by one biographer and as a "Robin Hood" by another. And he would be even more confused by his portrayal in motion pictures and in the written word.

To the brand of "Outlaw" he would readily subscribe, but that was no indication that he had any real criminal instincts, either inherited or acquired. Rather, his deeds and the shadowy trails he rode were simply a matter of economics of his times. Indeed, he wore his title of "Outlaw" with a certain kind of pride, because during that era his was considered by many as an honorable a profession as any other. Many lawmen, themselves "converted outlaws," shared the same regard, because often his exploits were applauded by lawmen as well as onlookers—and not infrequently by the

victims themselves. But however accurate or fancied the chronicles of his exploits may be, he has become irrevocably romanticized in fable and song. He was the Longrider of the Owlhoot Trail.

An applicable mosaic of such a "long-riding outlaw" might be found in the person of one Robert Leroy Parker, alias Butch Cassidy.

The Owlhoot Trail that Cassidy and other longriders like him rode ran right down the backbone of the nation, reaching all the way from Canada to Mexico. Not that there was any definable trail *per se*, but there were way stations scattered along the route that were considered generally safe stopping-over places for the longriders. Contrary to popular belief, these way stations were not hideouts as such, but rather isolated cabins, or well known ranches, and even towns where the citizenry were more apt to accept the generosity of the outlaws than to tip off the law. In fact, some individuals and communities derived a larger share of their livelihood from the longriders than from any other source. Such names as Landusky, Montana; Baggs and Kaycee, Wyoming; Green River, Utah and Alma, New Mexico were well known sanctuaries along the Owlhoot Trail. Such places offered a reasonable amount of security, especially when they knew that their local saloons or other establishments of pleasure and necessity would benefit generously out of the pockets of the Owlhooters. But any Owlhooter with a high enough price on his head to make him attractive game to lawmen or citizenry alike found his sanctuary in any one of the impenetrable fortresses spaced about equidistant along the trail: the Hole-in-the-Wall in central Wyoming; Brown's Hole at the three-cornered junction of Utah, Wyoming and Colorado, and Robber's Roost, in southeastern Utah. At sometime or other, all of the Owlhoot Trail traffic was either



This old cabin, hidden away from sight, was never actually occupied, but served well as a stopover place along the Owlhoot Trail.

TRAIL

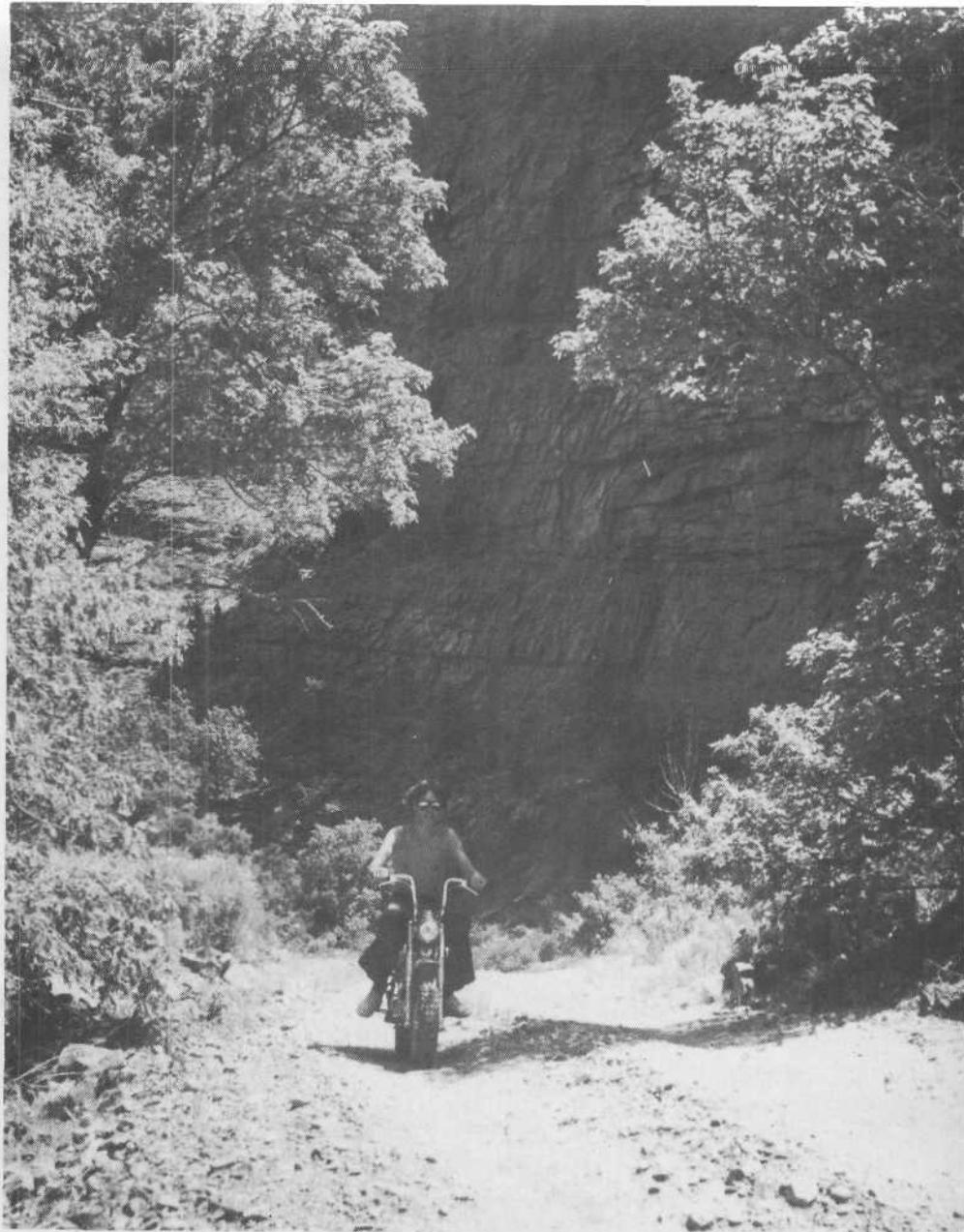
by MEL LEWIS

Crouse Canyon: The only entrance to Brown's Hole. A major part of the Owlhoot traffic was funneled through here. If the traveler's proper credentials were not made manifest, passage was denied by a quick bullet from any one of a hundred vantage points.

going to or coming from any one of these three natural fortresses.

Over the life-span of the trail, many unbelievable rides, requiring super-human feats of horsemanship and endurance, were carried out by groups or individual longriders. Some rides were later epitomized in script and song, while others, perhaps the most heroic, lived and died only in the memories of those who performed them. Perhaps one of the most fantastic rides of all was carried out by Butch Cassidy and three of his companions, generally accepted to have been Bob Meeks, Sam McCaig and Elza Lay.

It all started on a quiet April afternoon in 1897 in the coal mining town of Castlegate, Utah. The paymaster for the Pleasant Valley Coal Company had just picked up the payroll money from the Denver and Rio Grande Railway express car out of Salt Lake City, and with his burden of cash mounted the outside stairway leading to the coal company office. He never completed his trip, because comfortably seated directly in his path on about the fifth stair was one Butch Cassidy. The sixgun in Cassidy's hand told eloquently everything the paymaster needed to know. And if he had any notions of protest, the quiet appearance of Elza Lay's gun at the back of his neck removed any doubts as to who



might be in charge.

This was the first major robbery engineered and directed by Butch Cassidy and it instantly set him apart as the undisputed architect of the profession. Within minutes after the Castlegate robbery, Butch Cassidy and selected members of the "Wild Bunch" were \$8000 richer and well on their way to Robber's Roost.

The chase that followed would have made good material for a cops and robbers comedy. The sheriff, summoned from the county seat of Price, was almost a day late in arriving and assembling a posse—and then, led them off in the wrong direction. A switch engine with a flat car was commandeered from D & RG Railroad and loaded with armed men—and it took off in the wrong direction. Posse from two different towns, Price and Huntington, met somewhere in the

darkness of night—and fired on each other, each thinking that the other was the outlaws.

It was no problem for the famous outlaws to reach Robber's Roost in safety, for Cassidy had carefully planned their escape route and had stationed fresh horses and water along the way. There is little doubt that they were well within the confines of Roost country before any pursuing posse really got organized. However, the ensuing days presented a different kind of problem.

There is an indisputable law of human nature decreeing that several daring young men with a full ration of wild oats yet to sow and with more money in their pockets than they'd ever seen in all their lives weren't going to appreciate the solitude of the Roost for very long. True enough, several ladies had been brought in for their pleasure, and gambling in



various forms was a round-the-clock pastime, but, such things were no substitute for an insatiable appetite for the wonders of the outside world. So was initiated one of the most memorable rides ever undertaken by the riders of the Owlhoot Trail.

Under cover of darkness, Cassidy and his companions, with their saddle bags stuffed with money fairly jingling to be spent, mounted up and struck out on a course for the more desirable atmosphere of Baggs, Wyoming. They pulled out at night because, contrary to popular belief, the Roost, instead of being a maze of pinnacles and inaccessible canyons, is in reality a large, low-crowned swell of ground that can easily be observed from many distant vantage points. However, that is precisely the geological characteristic that made the Roost an ideal fortress for the outlaws to defend. They, too, could observe activities for many miles around, which gave them the advantage of ample notice for the setting up of an ambush for the reception of any unwanted intruders. But as long as the outlaws moved to and from the Roost by certain guarded routes and under the cover of darkness, the likelihood of observation was improbable.

By the way the crow flies it is about 240 miles from the Roost to Baggs. By the way the horse trots it's more like 300 miles. But any way you measure it, it's, as they say in Texas, "A fur piece." Since it is well known that the outlaws

Any artifacts left to attest to the Owlhooters habitation of Robber's Roost are indeed hard to find. This old boot which we photographed there may or may not be a memento of those times, but it serves well to fire up the imagination.

favored the Horseshoe Canyon area of the Roost, we conjectured that they began their ride from there. Accordingly then, we selected Horseshoe Canyon as our own starting point.

The Green River Desert slopes north and east away from the Roost and offers only two reliable water holes along the northerly direction of the Owlhoot Trail. These are Dugout Spring and North Spring, respectively about 10 and 18 miles north of the Roost, and the only sources of water between there and the San Rafael River, some 40 miles to the northeast. The canny Owlhooters, knowing that both Dugout and North springs were likely to be watched, had previously put a little something in the bank by burying several containers of water in the sand drifts at the base of the Flat Top Buttes which lie due north of the Roost and several miles west of the springs. That little trick had fooled more than one pursuing posse who, rather than attempt to trail the outlaws, had simply set up an

ambush at the springs, only to wait in vain for their quarry to appear.

From the Roost then, we followed the likely trail—a pretty good road now—that sloped down from the crown of the swell with plenty of pinyon and juniper for cover. After about 20 miles we dropped over a sandstone shelf and out onto the sandy Green River Desert. We nooned at the base of the Flat Tops and spent some time there searching through the sand drifts for the most likely place that the outlaws would choose to cache their water supply. Such places were in abundance, any one of which would be a good choice. From the Flat Tops the trail continues north and by using existing ranch and survey roads we were able to parallel it, staying to the desert and bypassing Dugout and North Springs by about five miles to the north. A good rider and horse could make that part of the journey with little trouble, but mechanized as we were, we were obliged to seek out established roads to complete the trip.

Before dawn and after a ride of at least 60 miles across the desert, the Owlhooters rode into the town of Green River where they refreshed themselves and their mounts at the cabin of a widow whose departed husband had been sym-



pathetic to the cause. As the story goes, the penniless widow was awakened in the dawn by the sound of gunfire and dashed outside to find the outlaws methodically shooting the heads off her chickens—the last means of survival she had left. But she was paid far more money than she had ever seen for the chicken dinner she subsequently served her guests, and the fact that she'd even heard of them was never mentioned in the wrong company.

Rested and with appetites satisfied, the Owlhooters forded the Green River and cut toward the east where they would by-pass the sometimes unfriendly community of Thompson. They entered

the mouth of a three-forked canyon that snaked and sloped upward toward the lofty ledges of the Roan Cliffs. A rich deposit of coal had recently been discovered in the main canyon, and the boom town of Sego was enjoying the calamity of its birthright. The outlaws passed through Sego with no more notice given them than any other drifters who were crowding to the area.

As the old-timers put it, "Them next 40 miles are more vertical than horizontal. To git up there a man'd do better with buzzard wings than horses hooves." There is a certain amount of truth to that. Now, however, there is a good road through the canyons and up the precipi-

for about 50 miles to its confluence with Willow Creek. And as if that 50 miles wasn't enough, the jingle of money in their saddlebags urged them onward for at least another 40 miles before they made camp at the Davis Ranch on Brush Creek in the Uintah Basin, and just a scant day's ride from Brown's Hole.

On the fourth day on their monumental ride, the Owlhooters met the rising sun as they topped out at the parent springs of Brush Creek in the high flat country of Vernal, Utah. Through the morning hours they cantered across the lush green flats, and as morning surrendered her tenure to afternoon they passed within hailing distance of Matt War-

This old ranch is purported to be the location of the destitute widow's home where Butch Cassidy and his friends stopped for an impromptu chicken dinner.



This old cabin, located on the west slope of Diamond Mountain, is said to be one of the places frequently used by Butch Cassidy when in the area of Brown's Park.

tous face of the Roan Cliffs, but during the Owlhooter's time it certainly must have taken buzzard's wings to make it. Whatever method used, they made it. They topped out at better than 9000 feet high on the edge of the East Tavaputs Plateau and made camp amid the high country spruces at the headwaters of Hill Creek on what is now the southwest corner of the Uintah-Ouray Indian Reservation.

You can't spend much money on the wild high country, so the next leg of the ride wasn't long in getting underway. The Owlhooters followed Hill Creek along its meandering way across the most rugged part of the East Tavaputs

ner's ranch, himself one of their breed, and skirted the west slope of Diamond Mountain. They slipped into the narrow and tightly guarded confines of Crouse Canyon, and because they were known and gave the right signals, the guards stationed at hidden vantage points allowed them to pass.

There must have been a momentous reunion at the Crouse Ranch in Brown's Hole that night. Charlie Crouse himself was a frequent dealer in rustled livestock. Matt Warner, later to become a lawman, was there. Tom McCarty, the outlaw credited with teaching the tricks of the trade to both Warner and Cassidy,

Continued on Page 35

Taos is Still Magic



by RUTH W. ARMSTRONG

Pueblo photo by New Mexico State Tourist Bureau.

IF YOU SEE the flag flying over Taos plaza at night, don't think they're being careless. Taos is one of the few places in the United States that has permission to fly the flag past sundown. It dates back to the beginning of the Civil War when southern sympathizers kept removing the Union flag. Kit Carson and several other Taos frontiersmen went to the mountains and cut the tallest pine tree they could find, nailed the flag to it, and planted it in the plaza. Then to be sure no one climbed the tree at night and removed Old Glory, they took turns standing guard on the rooftops of buildings around the plaza. They were all sharp shooters, so there was no more trouble. From that episode Taos was granted special permission to fly the flag 24 hours a day.

Taos is different from any other place in a hundred ways. It glows with a physical radiance, white sunlight and lavender



St. Francis of Assisi Mission, Ranchos Taos. Photo by Ruth Armstrong.

Below: A wide-angle view of Taos Pueblo taken in 1940. Little change has taken place through the years. Photo by U.S. Indian Service.



der shadows, blue distance and golden earth. The quality of its light has drawn artists since 1912 when Blumenschein, Phillips, Ufer, Higgins, Dunton, Beninghaus, Sharp and Couse formed the Taos Society of Artists. These men are gone now, but their names are still important in the art world.

The magic of Taos was felt by D.H. Lawrence and thousands of other creative people. Whether the mystery lies in the radiant light, the legends, history, its foreignness, or as some spiritualists believe, in a magnetism that comes up out of the earth there, it's a place to visit if you want long memories.

Summer is hectic. No town of 15,000 can accommodate 100,000 visitors with-

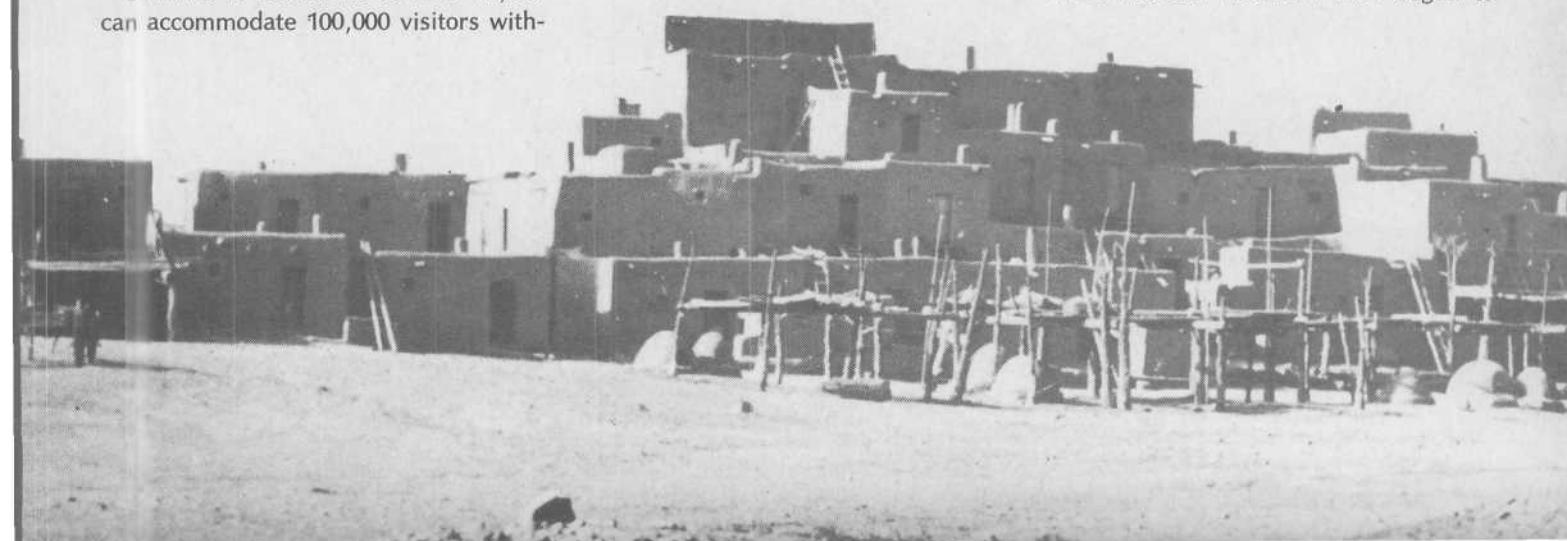
out straining somewhere. Streets are crowded, stores are jammed, it's hard to get a motel reservation, restaurants have waiting lines, but if that's the only time you can go, it's better than not at all. Even in summer there are quiet, shady patios, cool galleries, crisp nights and mountains all around.

Taos was settled in the early 1600s, and like all early towns in New Mexico, was close to an Indian pueblo. The reservation now adjoins the city limits. Though probably the most famous of the 19 New Mexico pueblos, most photographed, subject of many movies, books and articles, it remains conservative, not

even permitting electricity within the old part of the pueblo.

Centuries ago most pueblos were from three to five stories high, like so many building blocks stacked stair-step fashion, with ladders protruding from roofs. Taos is the only pueblo left that still has an original five-story building.

Taos Pueblo was the place where fierce Plains Indians met the peaceful Pueblo Indians on neutral ground. Twice a year throughout the 1700s and 1800s the nomads from the plains came to Taos to trade buffalo skins for agricultural products and crafts made by the Pueblo Indians and Spaniards. When French and American mountain men began to



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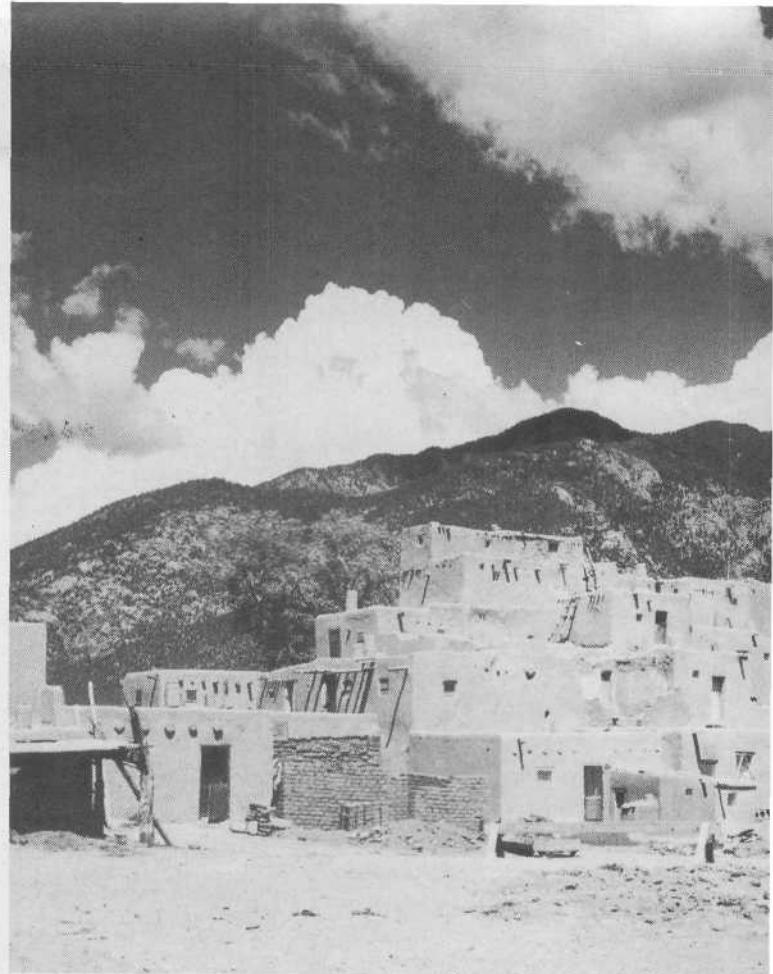
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Right:
Taos Pueblo.
Harvey Caplin
photograph.

Below:
Taos Indian
and
baby.
Photo by
Frasher.



trap beavers in the Rocky Mountains in the 1800s they, too, came to Taos to trade with the Indians and Spaniards.

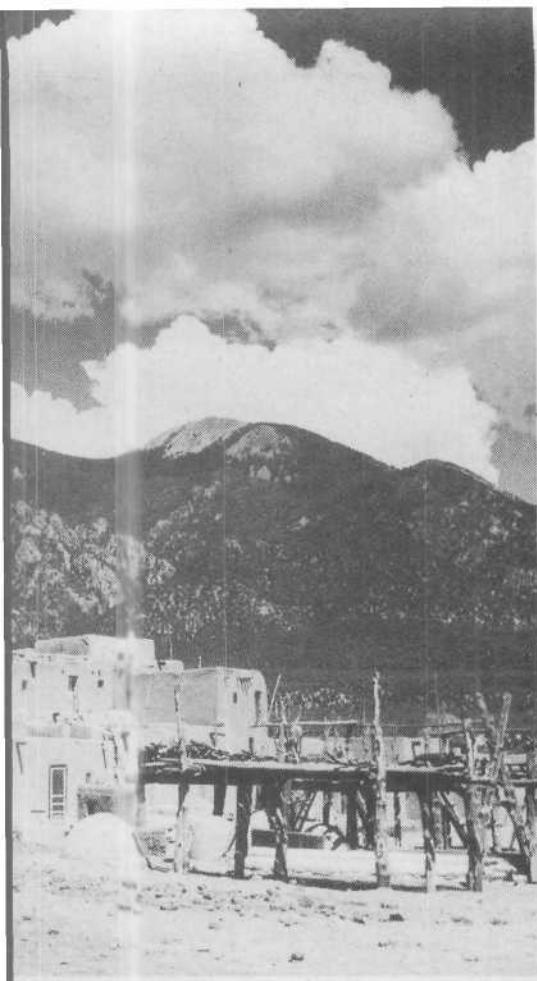
Through those years of contact the Taos Indians acquired traits and characteristics, even physical resemblances, to the Plains Indians. For example, the braided hair, the making and using of beaded leather objects, and some even have the thin faces and aquiline noses of the Plains Indians.

Taos Pueblo is open to visitors, and there is a visitor fee of \$1.50 which includes a picture-taking permit. The big celebration of the year is the Fiesta of San Geronimo on September 29 and 30, which celebrates their patron saint. Other dances are January 1 and 6; May 3; June 24; July 25 and 26; and December 24 and 25. On these special feast days photography is not permitted.

Taos offers a banquet of art that overwhelms the eye and the soul. Everywhere are galleries and studios of famous and hope-to-be-famous people. Excellent crafts are available in shops all over town — jewelry, pottery, fabrics, metal, wood — and as with the art, prices vary considerably according to the reputation of the craftsman.

Kit Carson, famous scout, frontiers-





man, soldier and friend of the Indian, spent the last few years of his life in Taos and is buried in Kit Carson State Park on the main street of Taos. A block away is Governor Bent Museum which preserves the adobe home of the first American governor of New Mexico Territory after the occupation. Charles Bent and his brothers established Bents Fort, historic landmark on the Santa Fe Trail, where Mountain Men like Kit Carson brought beaver pelts to trade. Bent was murdered in this house in 1847, but his wife and her sister, Kit Carson's wife, escaped by digging through an adobe wall.

Mabel Dodge Lujan wrote an interesting chapter in the history of Taos. It was she who encouraged D.H. Lawrence and many other writers and artists to come to Taos in the 1920 and 1930s. She gave Lawrence a ranch in the mountains north of Taos where he found brief times of serenity. After he died in France in 1930 his widow brought his ashes back to the ranch and built a shrine to his memory. The ranch was willed to the University of New Mexico, and creative writing and philosophy and other seminars are held there in the summer. It is open to visitors at no charge.

There are several restaurants of note in the Taos area, and two of the best are La Dona Luz and Casa Cordova. La Dona Luz, just a half block off the plaza, has an impressive wine cellar and features New Mexican (a combination of Spanish and Mexican) and French cuisine. Casa Cordova is in a lovely old country hacienda on the road to Taos Ski Valley, the most challenging of the 13 in the state. Dinners at these restaurants run between \$8 and \$12, not including wine. A good dinner of chicken or fish is served family style at a small restaurant about three miles north of town, the Country Kitchen. The food is plain, but very well prepared and seasoned, the restaurant is immaculate, and the price is \$5. There are two other fine restaurants near the ski area, with prices somewhat higher than those in town.

Ranchos de Taos used to be a village three miles south of Taos, but the two villages ran together some time ago. The mission church at Ranchos, though not one of the oldest in New Mexico (1722), is probably the best known and most photographed because it is a classic example of early pueblo mission architecture.

The Rio Grande runs a few miles west of Taos creating a deep and spectacular gorge through a volcanic plateau. Some of the best fishing in the state is on this part of the upper Rio Grande. On the east side of Taos dark, brooding mountains run north and south as far as you can see. There are small, old-world villages in every valley, and many beautiful forest campgrounds.

You have to drive, walk, or ride a horse to get to Taos because it has no air or train service. Albuquerque, 130 miles south of Taos, is served by TWA, Frontier, Continental, and Texas International air lines, and all rental cars are available at the airport. Take Interstate 25 north to Santa Fe, and then U.S. 84-285 north to Taos.

Taos is a jewel of many facets, but it's not for everybody. Some find the narrow or non-existent sidewalks, unpaved streets, cracked tile in the bathrooms and the laissez-faire attitude of the people a little disconcerting, but for those who like art, literature, history, unsurpassed scenic beauty and the flowing natural lines of pueblo architecture it is an experience to be enjoyed and a memory to be treasured. □

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DESERT DEATH IMAGES

by
MERLE
HOWARD
GRAFFAM

These strange figurines found in the Coachella Valley, California, in 1931 remain unique among the many types of figures yet found in the Southwest deserts.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

THE FIRST officially reported anthropomorphic (human-shaped) clay figurines found in California were unearthed in 1940 by a University of California field party at a depth of 29 inches, in a shell midden near San Francisco Bay. Experts were excited because it had been believed that California Indians did not produce clay figurines in human form.

To this day, information is limited as to their extent of manufacture, purpose and origin. Specimens are rare, but not as rare as once suspected.

In 1931, nine years before the UC finds, a Coachella Valley man came upon a wind-blown cremation in a date grove in Indian Wells. The burn produced several fired-clay figurines of a unique design. This remarkable collection has been kept wrapped in a box for 47 years, and this article is the first printed mention of them. (See Figs. 1 through 10.)

Only one of the figures is complete. The rest are portions of not less than 10 figures. Most appear to be female and the hips and buttocks are greatly enlarged from human proportions, suggesting that these may be "increase charms" or "fertility dolls." The figures apparently were painted red. Designs upon them are incised into the clay before firing.



Fig. 28
(1/2 actual size)

Several points of similarity are obvious when they are compared to other figures found locally, such as the shape of the head and shoulders, lines on the face (possibly tattooing) and applied or pinched breasts. These similarities may indicate that this stylization of the human shape was a well-established art form among the Desert Cahuilla of the Coachella Valley. More recently discovered figures also fall into this style. (Fig. 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15.)

All of the figurines from this region mentioned so far were found in an area less than five miles square. The great number of specimens in such a small area would suggest that the supposed rarity of this artifact type is an illusion.

There are inherent problems, however. Most are unfired and when the winds blow the sand away, the figures fall to dust. In fact, many had to be soaked in glue in order to preserve them from disintegration.

The cove area of La Quinta has produced some astonishing pieces, including the largest human clay effigy found in the greater Southwest (40.4 cm) and the smallest (5.5 cm). Quite different from those described above, some of these weird figures look back at the viewer with "coffee bean eyes," which appear closed, a trait which probably

Fig. 6



Fig. 7



These amazing fired clay artifacts are reproduced here in their natural color and are actual size. Color photography by George Service.

Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



gave rise to the local theory that they represent the dead (Fig. 16). Several have been found, however, with eyes missing or with round eyes lacking slits (Figs. 17 and 18). Most do not have arms or legs, but there are exceptions, such as shown in Figs. 19 and 20.

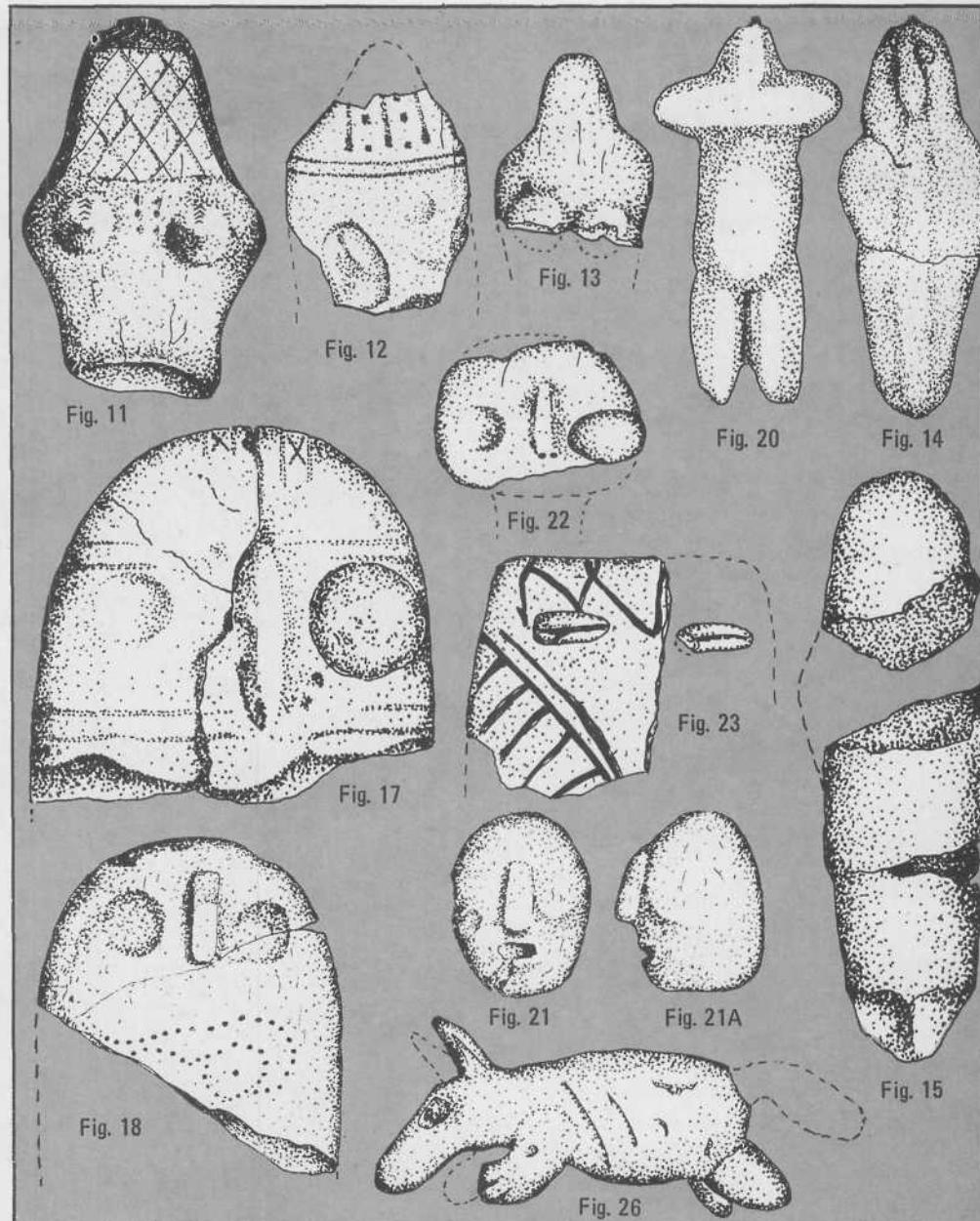
In a 1943 report, archaeologist Robert F. Heizer concluded (though no conclusive evidence supported the theory at the time) that California clay figures would eventually be found to fall into peripheral Hohokam context, meaning that California Indians picked up this art form by diffusion from the greater Southwest, Hohokam or Anasazi areas.

The "coffee bean eyes" and prominent noses are found in the Santa Cruz phase of the Hohokam at Snaketown, Arizona. Ken Hedges, of the San Diego Museum of Man, in a 1973 report on 55 specimens from Southern California, called them Hakataya figurines. The term "Hakataya" relates these figures to Western Arizona cultures. Hohokam-type artifacts are also occasionally found in the Coachella Valley. A glycymeris shell bracelet was found in a bull-dozed cremation in west Indio, and ceremonial arrowpoints (called by local collectors "fishpoints") are only semi-rare throughout the entire area from Palm Springs to the Salton Sea. These long, serrated points are probably not of local manufacture, but Hohokam imports. Heizer's prediction of the original context of these figures being peripheral Hohokam is strongly supported by such evidence.

Coachella Valley has produced such a wide range of figurine types, however, that they probably represent a wide mix of cultural influences from the north as well as from the east (and perhaps Mexico).

A very unique fired-clay figurine was found by a La Quinta man who was strolling one afternoon on the bank of a storm channel. The gray clay indicates it was fired in a reducing atmosphere (covered fire). This figure was probably manufactured elsewhere and imported, since this method of firing was not used in the manufacture of Cahuilla ceramics. Instead, they fired pottery in a relatively open fire (oxidizing atmosphere) which turns the iron in clay yellow or buff. Most of the fired Coachella Valley figurines are the latter color.

The shape is also uncommon. Arms and legs are apparent and the figure is



visibly pregnant. The front is totally rounded while the back is perfectly flat, as if the figure had been formed on a stone slab. The overall shape is cruciform (cross-shaped). (Fig. 20.)

In another instance, an Indio man found a small clay head with nose, mouth and the characteristic high cheekbones of the Indian people (Figs. 21 and 21A). In some specimens, nostrils are punched with a cactus spine and either red or black lines are painted on the faces (Figs. 22 and 23). A spatulate figure was found by Karl Bennis in the Borrego desert several years ago (Fig. 28). Male figures of this type are occasionally found in the Coachella Valley.

Though not as beautifully made as the Northern tradition figurines found near Price, Utah in 1950 by Clarence Pilling

(Figs. 24 and 25), some Coachella Valley figurines do bear resemblance to them. (See *The Pilling Figurines*, Enid C. Howard, *Desert Magazine*, September 1973, pp. 19-20.)

At least two zoomorphic (animal-shaped) figures have been found (Figs. 26 and 27). These two pieces (one a coyote, the other apparently a desert toad) were found with a lump of clay which bears finger and palm prints. All three are unfired pure clay.

The questions which arise from these strange figures are: What are they? How were they used? What did they represent? Several theories have been presented, six of which follow.

(1) FERTILITY FIGURES

Basketmaker II and Fremont figurines

Fig. 19

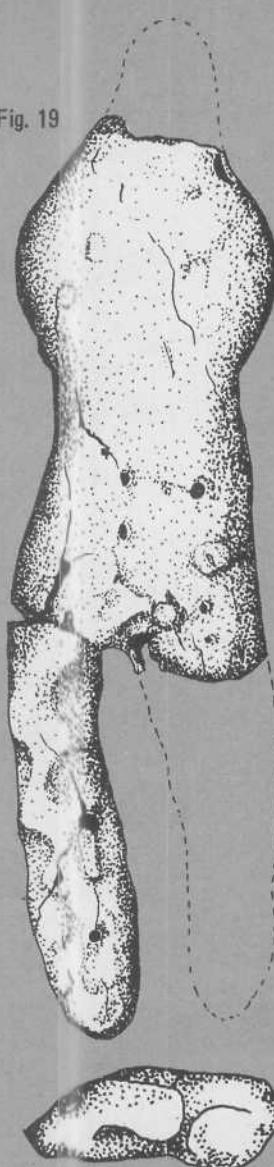
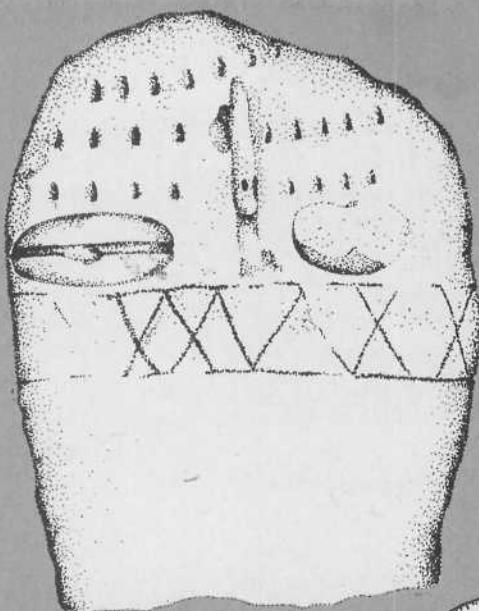


Fig. 27



All illustrations by the author. Artifacts are illustrated same size as actual specimens unless otherwise noted.

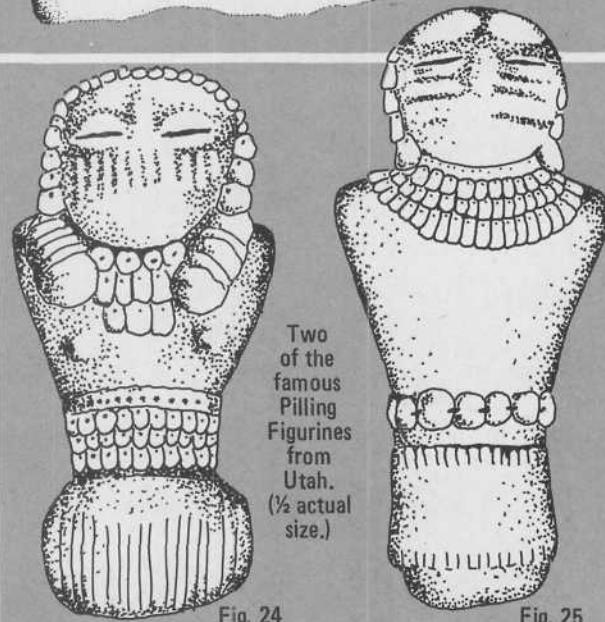
Fig. 16
(2/3 actual size)

Fig. 24

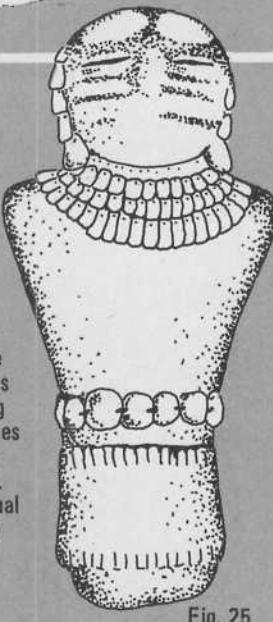


Fig. 25

were manifestations of the "corn-growing complex." Archaic Mexico also produced figures which were scattered in the fields to produce abundant harvests. Though the Desert Cahuilla were not agricultural until modern times, there are areas of their religious belief in which a "mother goddess" or "fertility goddess" might have fit. We do know that the Pomo, Zuni, Hopi and Cochiti Indians made flat clay figures as magical child-getting charms.

(2) CURING FETISHES

California witch doctors, or shamans, are known to have sucked wounds or painful areas to pull out the evil which they thought caused the illness. In 1928, record was made of a Havasupai shaman who told an ill man that his dead great-grandfather had invaded his body

and was causing the sickness. Among several objects produced by the shaman as having been sucked out of the pained area was a "little white man" with a head but no limbs. He showed this figure often as proof of his curative powers.

(3) DEATH IMAGES

One image found in Indio was discovered buried head down, with the face pointed to the east. The lifeless look of the coffee-bean eyes and the fact that some are found in cremation burns has led us to suspect that the figures represented the dead in mourning ceremonies.

(4) AFTERLIFE FIGURES

An extension of the preceding theory was presented in 1973 by Paul Glace,

former technical advisor to Pacific Coast Archaeological Society. An aged Seri woman reported that in her youth, small figures were given to children at their "naming ceremony," to represent traits the children should develop during their lives. Mr. Glace proposed that female clay figurines found in a cremation (as those found in 1931 in the Coachella Valley) may have symbolized traits not attained in life by a young female, but hoped for in afterlife. To prove this, archaeologists would have to compare figurines and cremation remains to see if there is a consistent relationship between these pieces and burials of young females.

(5) TOYS

Another theory is that they are simply toys. Some may be; the animal figures suggest this possibility. But experts do not believe this of most human figurines, because of the burial associations in adult cremations and the fact that of the Coachella specimens, about 80 percent are unfired. From a practical standpoint, unfired figures would not be durable enough for children's toys.

(6) HEXING OBJECTS

Among both the Luiseno and Diegueno of Southern California, figurines have been identified as hexing objects. Some witches and shamans were said to have the power to kill people with their thoughts. Sometimes small clay images were made, then trampled upon while thoughts of hate and death were projected toward them.

The truth may be that of the six theories presented, several may be valid. The variety of forms and the large range of these figures over California and the greater Southwest may indicate that in one area they were used for one purpose and in another area they served a different function.

Much more information must be gathered before these riddles can be answered adequately. However, much of the land in the Coachella Valley is being developed rapidly. Of the more than 50 specimens known to the author, many were found on what was open desert but is now the site of homes or golf courses. Unfortunately, there is no strata to desert archaeological sites; the first blade of the tractor destroys all.

The answers to the questions raised by these intriguing figurines are still to be found in the sand—at least for a time. □

POORLY EQUIPPED by Nature for manufacturing body heat, lizards are unable to maintain a constant temperature within themselves. Their temperatures therefore vary with that of their surroundings, and they are dependent upon outside sources of heat to warm them sufficiently for activity.

Hence they tend to dwell where the sun is on the job most of the year, and heat loss is minimum. This is why, naturally, that the arid regions of the Southwest and particularly the lower desert sections are not likely to run short of them. However, not all lizards subscribe to the rank and file's idea of suitable real estate. Some have even invaded the mountains taking on a host of altitude-related problems besides temperature regulation made more difficult by the cold. One such intrepid character is Yarrow's spiny lizard.

Sceloporus jarrovi is a very handsome fellow to be sure in his spiny armor. The scales on his back are brilliant with highlights of white, touched with pinks and blues and edged in black. His broad black collar with its white trim adds a dash to his raiment, surpassed only by the sweep of dark metallic blue that reaches from his throat down over his chest onto his belly. While Ms. *jarrovi*'s couturier selected more muted body tones for her costume, she still wears her clan's smart black collar, and during the social season, her throat and chest are a beautiful light sky blue.

Very much at home in their southern Arizona-southern New Mexico montane environment, the *jarrovis* are rock enthusiasts. Agile climbers, they live on walls and ledges of cliffs and canyons, in and about rock slides, amongst boulders and crevices. They dearly love to perch on a rock and bask in the sunshine and while soaking up the warmth, practice their lunch catching technique. This consists of sitting motionless until an insect happens along. Then—a lightning-fast move, a snatch, and another luckless insect joins some 20 of its predecessors in a *jarrovi*'s podded-out stomach.

They tend to live in the same general vicinity, so where there's one there's apt to be another and another. Each has its own home range and within this a territory which it defends the year around, and which is marked by some kind of personal scent, perhaps by substances from pores located on the underside of

the thighs. As the team of zoologists A. De Fazio, C. A. Simon, G. A. Middendorf and D. Romano found, *jarrovi* keeps up on the scent news by flicking out its tongue and touching its surroundings. The retracted tongue brings back chemical particles which stimulate a spot in the front of the palate called Jacobson's organ. This nerve-rich region is connected with the big olfactory nerve, and the news is transmitted along it to the smell center in the lizard's brain for proper action. Used in food finding and in courtship, this scent pick-up system is also very valuable in the maintenance of territory, since any lizard whose Jacobson's organ is working has no excuse for bumbling into the private property of another.

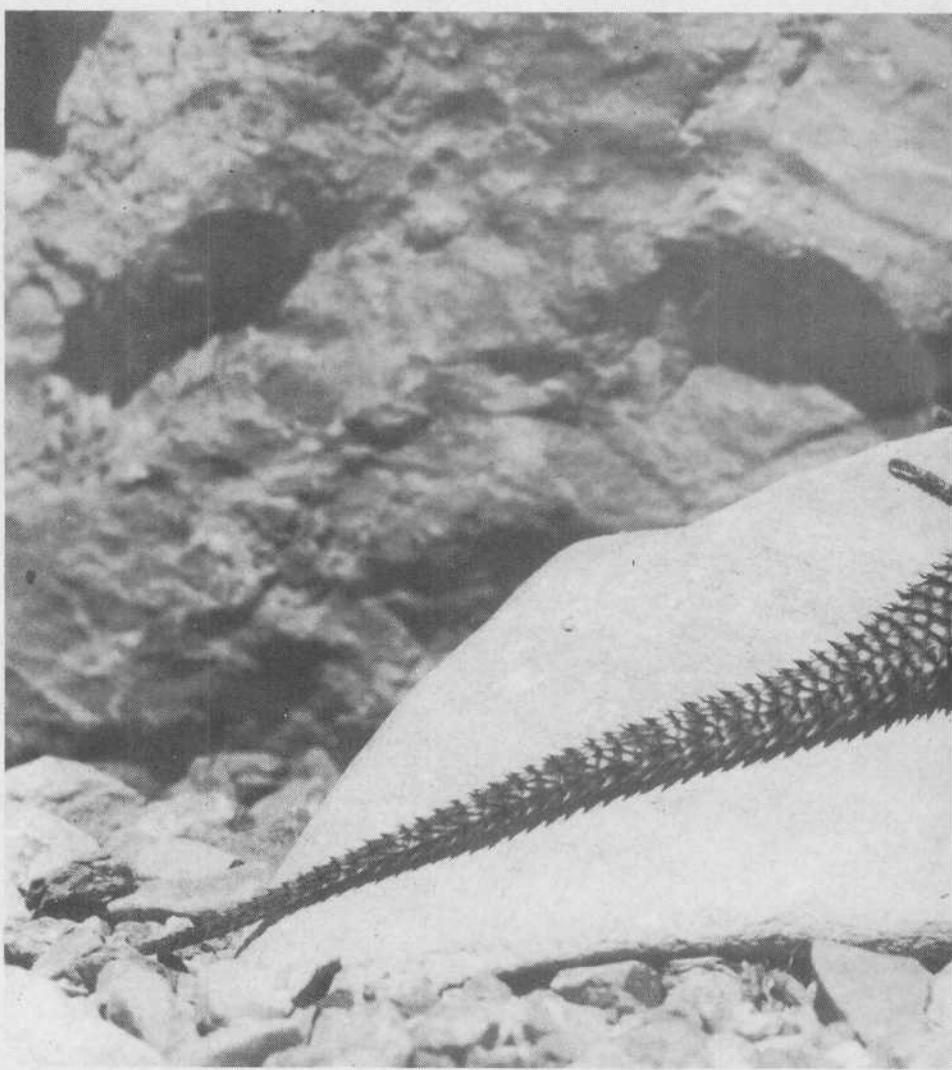
But supposing this happens. What then?

Zoologist D. Ruby set about finding out in his Arizona field study. To make things interesting, he introduced a tethered lizard into the territories belonging to selected active residents. In each case the intruder was discovered at once, and what followed then, seems to be a prescribed ritual in *jarrovi* circles.

The resident promptly sets about ejecting the intruder. The intruder, if smaller, beats a hasty retreat, so the job is easily done. But if they are about evenly matched in size, the resident gives a rapid head bob or two, then goes into pushup calisthenics, followed by a sudden extension of his throat region, arching of back and flattening of his

Yarrow's spiny lizard.
Photo by George Olin,
of Ajo, Arizona.

MOUNTAIN



sides. He looks, needless to say, suddenly very much larger and very, very unpleasant. This may be enough, the intruder indicating that he has lost interest in remaining. But, maybe he's tough, too, and has decided to stay. In fact, he's doing some fancy displaying himself. It appears neither is about to throw in the sponge. The resident now begins a series of warlike shuddering head bobs, and if these don't get immediate results — he charges!

Oddly enough, in all the tail lashing and ruckus that ensues, little biting takes place, for one or the other shortly retreats. The dominance display with its shuddering head bobs as high excitement point just prior to the charge gives the intruder a last chance to call it off. If

the fight does take place, the damage is small enough to keep everybody fairly intact and the species hasn't wasted any breeding material.

Such territorial defense is not limited to the aggressive males, but enthusiastically indulged in by the ladies among themselves and by juveniles against juveniles. It is a key factor in the overall success of the individual lizard, since spacing out in territories gives each a better chance at the food supply and whatever else the region has to offer.

Zoologist Simon, interested in knowing how the abundance or scarcity of food would affect the size of the territories defended, marked the lizards inhabiting a study area, plotted each one's territory and tinkered up the food supply. A

decrease—i.e. a drop in the insect population—called for more area to provide adequate food. The lizards expanded their territories in response to scarcity, the males, incidentally, quite careful to do their expanding away from the territory of a neighboring male.

How about an abundance of food?

Simon filled dishes with meal worms and set them about strategically. The largess was discovered at once, and if the food had been placed near the center of a territory, the resident promptly cut down on its land holdings to focus on an area closer around the dish. One female, faced with the sudden appearance of a dish of worms on her boundary, revised her lines to get the provender well inside. So what if it meant grabbing some of the territory belonging to the smaller female next door, and chasing her off? Another female with two dishes set about 20 feet apart on her boundary tried to defend both, but under the determined charges of her buxom neighbor next door, had to settle for one. She immediately revised her territory accordingly. Increased victuals eliminates the need for large territories, and the lizards are quick to take advantage of the situation, cutting down on the size they defend.

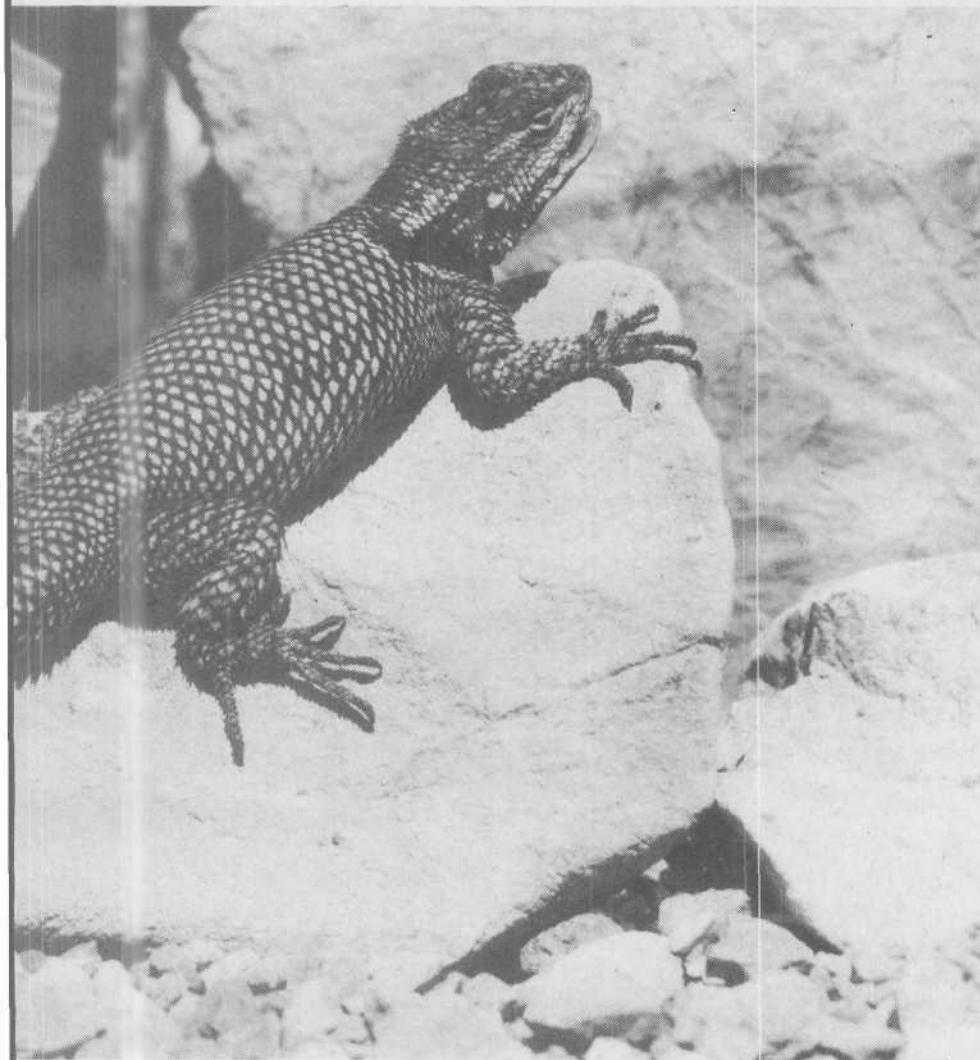
Interesting to report, when Simon collected the dishes and got ready to go home, the lizards restored the old status quo with the territorial set-up once again just about what it was before the scholarly nose was stuck into their affairs.

Ah, but the *jarrovis* have still a further strategy for divvying up the food resources. Simon, this time working with G. A. Middendorf, found that the lizards are not active every day, but average about two and a half days a week. But there is still more to this, for not only is the population therefore active on different days, those that are out are active at different times of the day. The adults tend to feed in the early morning, the juveniles around noon. Thus there can be overlapping of territories but they are time distince, as witness the jaunty juvenile sashshaying around the domain of a big male, which it would never have dared to do if the owner had been abroad.

Nor is this time division of the resources the only additional strategy. The lizards also make a vertical division of the habitat, perching at different levels. The youngest and smallest sit nearest the ground, the next size up further, and

LIZARD

by K. L. BOYNTON ©1978



the largest the highest up. Thus the *jarrovis* sitting and waiting for prey as is their wont are actually feeding at different levels. The result is that they catch different size insects and often different kinds, since the insects themselves do not all operate at the same levels. Prey selection by size even among the adults (the males tending to eat smaller ones than the females) further divides up the food supply.

What with the apportionment of the habitat by spacing and by time of activity and by perch height, the *jarrovis* have evolved a slick way of making the most of their mountain food supply. This steps up the carrying capacity of the area, most important since population size depends on what an environment can

support.

As might be expected, the reproductive strategy of these spiny lizards is geared to mountain living. Unlike their egg-laying cousins, they give birth to their young, a system which eliminates exposure of eggs to low temperatures and their loss to predators. They also pick an off-beat time of year for family production, their social hoe-down occurring in November and December. Any awkward situation that might result is avoided by delayed development of the embryos. Beyond getting a bare start, nothing much happens to them for about four months, so the females are not subjected to the stress of young development during the winter when food is limited. Then, along about March, as

anatomist S. R. Goldberg found, the embryos begin to grow very rapidly. Key factor here is the basking habit of the females who are thus able to raise their temperatures well above that of their environment, the increased warmth of their bodies speeding up embryo development considerably.

Born in May in the lower altitude mountains, and in July in the highest, the youngsters arrive at the very best time of year, for the weather is warm and the insect supply on the increase. These live birth youngsters are bigger upon arrival than the hatchlings of egg laying species, and their large size greatly increases their chances for survival. In fact, some 15 percent of the *jarrovi* young make it to maturity, a very good score for any lizard species. They mature fast, Zoologist R. E. Ballinger's investigations coming up with the eyebrow raising news that some 60 percent of the females in the lower altitude mountains are ready to join in the approaching fall breeding season, although they are only four to five months old. And this is something of a record for lizards.

One litter a season is par. The youngest and smallest females usually produce a family of two, the largest, experienced ladies averaging a bouncing ten. As the big energy-study conducted by Zoolologists D. W. Tinkle and N. F. Hadley concluded, these lizards show again that they know what they are about with their fall social season-delayed development system. Their reproduction chores are thus all over for the season by the time that most temperate zone lizards are putting much of their energy into the job. Hence the *jarrovis* can loaf away the summer, stuffing themselves with insects and growing. This results in a dramatic increase in body size for females between the first and second breeding seasons, enabling them to produce very large litters. In the numbers game, this pays off in species success.

So does their excellent adult survival rate, some 48 percent greater than that of early maturing egg laying lizards. Certainly the safety features of their rocky habitat cuts their losses to predators. Oddly enough, too, while it is true that the colder higher altitudes increase the lizards' need for temperature regulation, the altitude itself actually helps them to do so. Basking on the rocky outcrops, they have maximum exposure to intense solar radiation, for the air

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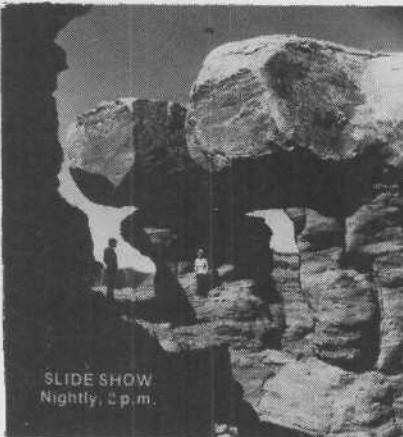
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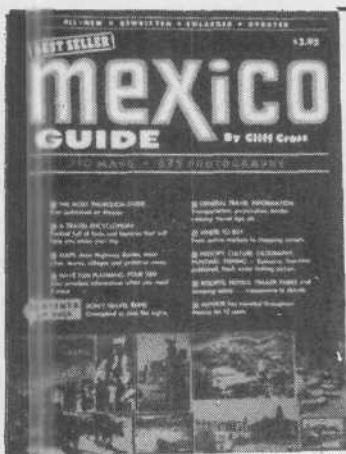
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column in mountains is thinner, with less vapor and dust content.

The *jarrovis* also know how to make the most out every little difference in conditions around them, for as Zoologist K. S. Norris points out, there can be great contrasts in temperatures *within* inches. A dark rock, for instance, warms up more and faster than a light colored one, so this is the one to sit on. A ledge sheltered from the wind in direct sunlight makes the job of heating up a *jarrovi*-sized lizard fairly easy. The lizard itself can also speed things up by darkening down its overall coloration, making a net heat gain of 4.1 deg. C a minute in this darkened condition as against 3.8 C in the light phase.

While *jarrovis* are active with body temperatures anywhere from 19-37 C, the preferred range seems to be 30-37 C. Zoologist T. A. Burns, working with two populations at 6,000 and 10,713 feet in the Pinaleno Mountains of Arizona, found that the lizards living below 6,000 feet took to scrub oaks for relief when the air temperature hit 35 C and the ground 40 C in summer. Further laboratory tests showed that these lizards do not pant when under high temperature stress, and thus are unable to unload heat by respiratory cooling. Pondering this, he wondered if maybe the isolation of this clan and their abundance over 6,000 feet in the mountains weren't maybe due to the fact that they just can't stand high temperatures.

They certainly can handle low ones, out grocerying at 10,000 feet when the air is a chilly 14 C. Come winter, however, and periods of prolonged cold, the *jarrovis* retire into deep crevices located on the southern and eastern slopes where there is the most sun and the least snow and where things are bound to warm up sooner. Piled some 15-30 lizards deep in those cozy crevices, they help keep each other warm, and whenever the scenery topside warms up enough, they emerge for sunning.

What with their system of divvying up the food supply, their use of unfavorable times of the year to get reproduction underway, and their ability to keep active in low temperatures, the *jarrovis* are well entrenched in their mountain homes. Zoologists viewing their early maturity and high scores in youngster and adult survival rates, are betting on considerable tribal increase. □



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ARAVAIPA



by
**GEORGE
WUERTHNER**

*Hiker about to ford
Aravaipa Creek.
We found sneakers
to be the best footgear
since creek crossings are
frequent, but pleasant
affairs. Notice the
shallowness of the creek.*

CANYONS

THE GREAT Blue Heron which flew towards the green cottonwood trees looked conspicuously out of place in the bright Arizona desert sunlight. Like a gull signalling land to sea-weary sailors, the heron meant to us that Aravaipa Creek and its deep canyon could not be far away.

Upon viewing the creek, I was astonished by its incredibly small size. Thirty feet wide and seldom more than a foot deep, the creek seemed incapable of cutting its splendid canyon with walls that rise more than a thousand feet from the creekbed.

Persistence is Aravaipa's secret. It flows year-round in an area where nearly all other streams dry up or flow only during summer cloudbursts. Aravaipa Creek patiently cut downward through rock, while at an equal rate of speed the surrounding land was being uplifted, creating the canyon.

The canyon's elevational range and constant water flow create a variety of habitats that attract plants and animals rare or non-existent in the surrounding desert. For the same reasons it attracts people from all over the country.

Aravaipa Canyon is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as a primitive area to ensure that its increasing popularity does not diminish its unique combination of plants, animals and wild qualities that makes a visit to this canyon special. Because of its classification as a Primitive Area, motorized transportation is prohibited within the 4,044-acre unit.

My companions and I selected Aravaipa over other areas because of its low elevation which makes it warm and pleasant in early spring when other canyons are still snowbound. Snow is almost unheard of in the canyon, except during the coldest winters.

We traveled with light backpacks exploring the canyon on foot at a leisurely pace. The canyon floor is nearly level and easy hiking for anyone in reasonable shape. The other people we met during

our stay ranged from seven to 70, each finding a portion of the canyon suitable to their ambition, and physical capabilities. Many did not attempt to hike the entire seven and one-half mile canyon, but followed the creek for a mile or two before returning to the parking lots located at the east and west entrances to the primitive area.

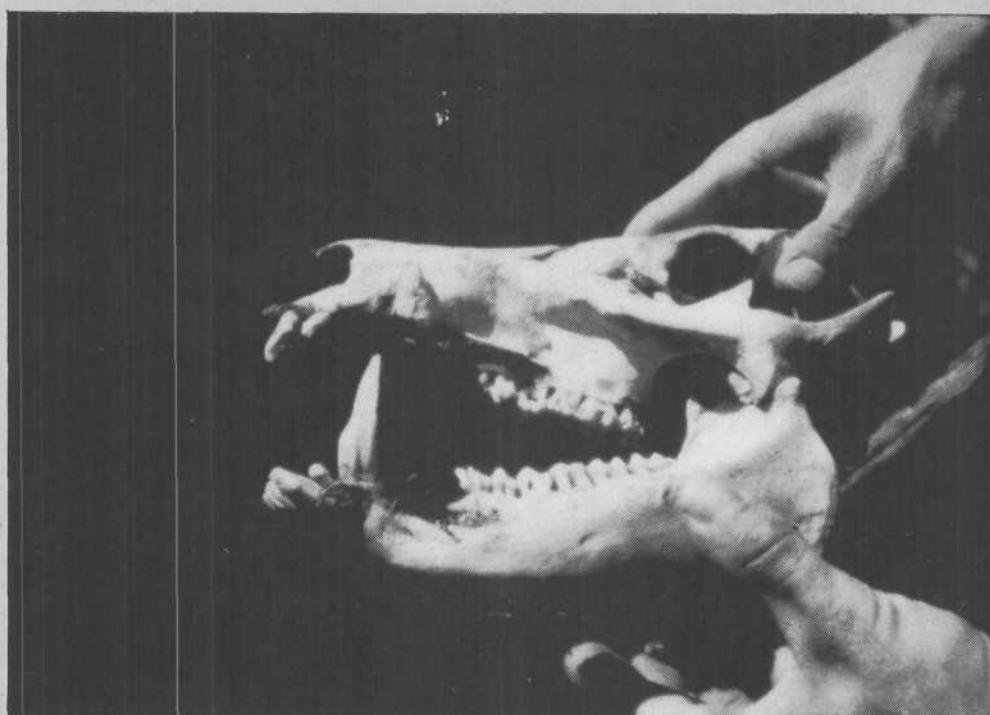
There are no marked trails within the canyon, hence wading the creek is frequently the easiest route. Since the creek is shallow and the bottom firm with few obstructions, we wore sneakers for all our hiking. Waders would be more comfortable in cold weather, but during the warmer months, the creek crossings are enjoyable for their cooling comfort. A word of caution: Sand often is trapped in footgear. To prevent painful blisters from developing, stop frequently to empty out any offending material.

If you look carefully at the canyon as you explore, a pattern of vegetation distribution will become apparent. The

sunny slopes will be dry and covered with saguaros and other desert plants, while the moister shaded slopes and the streamside will be covered by water-loving plants such as cottonwood, sycamore and ash. The sunny slope not only is drier, but has higher soil temperatures, evaporation rates and air temperatures than the shaded areas. For these reasons there is often a striking difference in appearance between two canyon walls though they may be less than 100 yards apart.

The different types of vegetation fulfill the habitat requirements for 158 species of birds. Songbirds are especially abundant and during the spring months their beautiful songs resound from every bush, cranny and tree. Birds rare in desert regions, such as the Bald Eagle and the Great Blue Heron, can be observed in the canyon.

The stream itself supports more species of native fish than any other in Arizona. None of them are sportfish, but



Javelina skull found in Virgus Canyon, an Aravaipa tributary. Javelina is one of many different types of wildlife observable in the Primitive Area.

they provide food for the bird and mammal predators of the creek.

I enjoy track watching and a canyon such as Aravaipa is perfect for this hobby. The narrow confines of the canyon walls restrict most wildlife travel to the creek bottom where the many sand and mud flats record their movement. I found the prints of deer, coyote and javelina. Some fortunate canyon visitors are occasionally treated to the sight of a fresh mountain lion print. These increasingly rare and exceedingly shy creatures still wander through the canyon, though in most cases the only trace of the big cats most people see is their round and clawless impressions left in soft mud.

Mexican wildlife species occasionally stray north of the border and are observed in the Primitive Area. The Zone Tail Hawk and the Coatiundi, a long-tailed animal similar to a raccoon, are typical Mexican species that wander north.

After we made our camp the first night, I climbed up on the canyon walls looking for caves and overhangs where Indian ruins might be found. I never found anything, but long before the white man, Indians dwelled beside the

flowing waters. Apache Indians lived near the canyon as little as 100 years ago. In 1871 blood was spilled. Local ranchers, baffled by unexplained murders and cattle losses, killed and enslaved 85 Apaches in what is now known as the Aravaipa Massacre.

The canyon is little changed from how it looked when the Indians lived along its tree-shaded course. To enjoy the primitive area to its fullest, spring would be the best season for a visit. The days are warm and the nights are pleasant. Fall is sometimes better for there are fewer people and the autumn foliage adds color to the already beautiful stream. Summer temperatures can easily rise to over 100 degrees, but there is always the stream to keep cool in. If you want solitude, take a trip in the winter months of December, January or February.

To maintain the canyon's primitive character, the BLM limits the number of visitors that may enter the canyon on any one day. All users are required to obtain a free permit either by writing the BLM District Office in Safford, Arizona or by inquiring at the visitor information stations located at the east and west entrances to the canyon. Reservations are recommended in the spring and on most weekends during the warmer months.

We found water to pose no problems. You can always drink from the stream. In addition there are seeps and springs scattered throughout the area. These can usually be spotted by looking for ferns and mosses growing along the canyon walls. All water *must be boiled* before using. Unless you plan to stay for several days, it's often easier to carry all

your drinking water with you.

Firewood is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain in the more popular camping areas, therefore the BLM requests that all cooking be done on small camp stoves. This is not required, and we found wood abundant in the tributary canyon we camped in, but the stove is easier to use and less demanding upon the limited wood resources of the canyon.

If you plan to hike through the entire Primitive Area, transportation can pose a slight problem since many miles of driving are involved in getting from one entrance to the other. The best solution is to find two hiking parties for the trip. Each group starts at an opposite entrance and vehicle keys are exchanged when the groups rendezvous at a pre-arranged location in the canyon.

The Primitive Area is located in eastern Arizona, northeast of Tucson, southeast of Globe, and east of Safford. If you come from the east, take Highway 70 through Safford. Approximately 15 miles northwest of town is the Klondyke Road turnoff. Follow this graded dirt road for 45 miles to the east entrance. If you come from the west, you'll want to follow Highway 77 until you see a well marked sign for Aravaipa Canyon Road. Go east for 13 miles on a paved and gravel road to the west entrance parking lot.

A visit to the canyon is worthwhile whether for a few days or a single afternoon. If you're a bird watcher, a wildflower enthusiast, an amateur archaeologist or even a track watcher; Aravaipa Canyon Primitive Area has something to offer everyone. □

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THE OWLHOOOT TRAIL

Continued from Page 19

was there. And so were the two Basset girls from another Brown's Hole ranch near the mouth of Lodore Canyon. Who else might have been there is lost to history, but since the news of the Castlegate robbery had preceded the Owlhooters into Brown's Hole, it's a good guess that the night wasn't spent popping corn and pulling taffy.

On the fifth day the Owlhooters left the festivities of Brown's Hole and gave their horses their heads for the good day's ride to Baggs, Wyoming and the promise of things to come. Somehow word of the approaching thunderstorm had reached Baggs ahead of the Owlhooters, and the local law, sympathetic or not, quickly found business elsewhere and dutifully tended to that business until the thunderstorm passed. What happened is really an inexplicable case history that the township of Baggs cherishes to this day. It has been said that the event was the biggest thing to happen in Wyoming since the Custer disas-

ter, but be that as it may, Baggs would in no way trade histories of that event with that of any other city in the nation. True enough, when the local law returned to the scene they found the town's best saloon literally shot to shreds. But the saloon owner, a man of good business acumen, had no regrets because out of the rubble he had collected a good enough share of the Castlegate payroll money to build the finest bar in Sweetwater County.

The Owlhoot Trail has long since passed from the memory of society. Somewhere it had to come to an end, and that happened when those hardy and daring souls who rode her main ways and side trails passed on to whatever estate awaited them. Some long forgotten oldtimer once sang an epitaph to her memory that seems well worth repeating.

She ran a thousand miles from heaven,

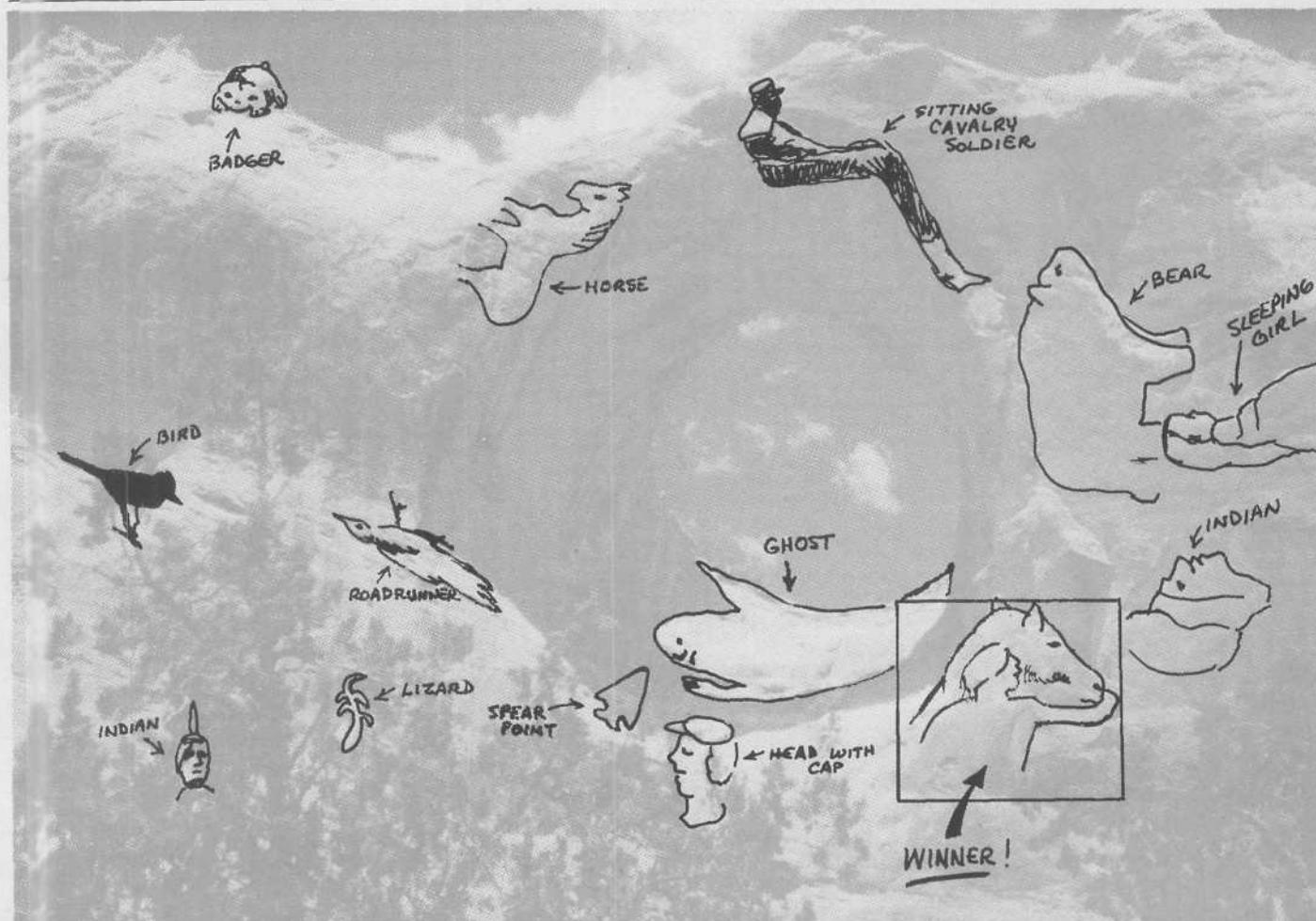
She ran a thousand miles to hell,
She ran a thousand miles from nowhere,

And be it just as well.

God Bless the Owlhoot Trail. □

Photo Quiz Answer

Our congratulations to Denise D'Amico of North Hollywood, California, who won last month's photo contest. This has been a fun thing for us at the office and we were amazed at the tremendous number of entries and the keen eyes of our readers. One found three Indians on horses, however, Merle Graffam, of Indio, California (author of "Desert Death Images," page 24), topped it off by discovering a variety of subjects. The correct location of the horse and Indian, and Merle's "pearls," are shown here for all to enjoy.





The water cart [above] was used during the building of the spur track of the Tonopah & Tidewater down China Canyon. Above right: Morrison's saloon, before remodeling, shows his name at the right of the door. A cellar tunneled into the hillside at the rear stored Quon Sing's produce. Far right: Desert willows follow the stream beyond the paymaster's station in China Canyon, and in the distance an artist's palette of hills ring Modine Meadows.

AD QUON SING been less industrious, his grandchildren might be living on the China Ranch today. But in the early 1900s, a pig-tailed "Celestial" wasn't considered worthy of the lush gardens that his cleverness had created from a desert spring.

The ranch is two miles southeast of Tecopa, California by blacktop road to the China Ranch sign; then another one and six-tenths mile by a gravel road that passes between towering canyon walls eroded with arches formed by wind and flash floods. A footpath near the largest "window" leads to a room-sized enclosure with two dry waterfalls. Initials are carved in the walls with the barely-legible date of 1880. Shafts of old talc mines and abandoned slabs of the mineral appear at intervals alongside the road. There are traces of the old spur track of the Tonopah & Tidewater Railroad the building of which brought about the odd disappearance of Quon Sing.

At the gate to the China Ranch, a visitor comes upon an unexpected scene of greenery in a rocky wilderness. Palm trees sway, and a mossy stream ripples its way through the verdant oasis.

It is believed that a Mr. Osborne, who had mining interests at Tecopa, gave Willow Spring to his Chinese cook in gratitude for years of faithful service. Quon Sing dug and coaxed the spring into abundant flow, then channeled its runoff into a streambed planted with cress and mint. Its water, unlike the alkali-tainted waters of other Amargosa Desert springs, is sweet and cool. He cleverly ditched the stream to irrigate his gardens, and built flood control dikes — a feat of hydraulic engineering that has withstood the test of time and flash floods that surge down the canyon.

The Chinaman planted date palms, fig trees, grape vines and all such succulent things. Years later, Charles Brown, the Death Valley area's merchant at Shoshone, shipped boxes of the choice black figs of the China Ranch to the Los Angeles market.

The development of nearby mines made the building of a spur track alongside Quon Sing's stream feasible, and workmen bought with relish his poultry, fresh eggs, pigs and produce. All in all, the ranch was just more than a mere Chinaman deserved, and soon Caucasian traders were peddling the ranch delicacies instead.

A man named Morrison was not long in building a saloon on Quon Sing's ranch. It is the stone building just inside the ranch gate, and before a recent remodeling, Morrison's name and the date of 1906 could be seen on it. In the cellar tunneled into the hillside were stored the fruits of the Chinaman's labor.

The China Ranch's first owner of record was a MacDonald who filed a homestead entry. Dan Modine and his wife, a daughter of the area's first white settler,

CHINA



RANCH

by NEMA ANDERSON

"Dad" Fairbanks, next lived on the ranch. A tragedy occurred when their small son played with matches in a shed by the streamside, and suffocated in the resultant fire.

Bill Greer next acquired ownership of the ranch, selling it in turn to a group of attorneys, but retaining life-time tenure. After his death the ranch endured years of indignities at the hands of tenants, squatters, and vagrant prospectors.

Ben and Maurine Robinson bought the ranch in 1955 from a Mr. Peterson. In repairing its rundown condition, they discovered that the ranch is a habitat for animal and plant species rare for the region, and rich in the artifacts of ancient peoples. Experts in their respective fields were welcomed by the Robinsons for studies which have provided a greater knowledge of the Amargosa region.

One sultry afternoon Mrs. Robinson also discovered why Quon Sing had built

such an extensive dike system. Driving down the canyon, she watched black clouds gather and heard the grinding roar of huge boulders tumbling before a wall of water. She scrambled up the canyonside in time to see her automobile inundated by a flash flood. After it receded she had to clamber over boulder-studded debris and through knee-deep mud to reach the ranch.

From the ranchhouse an Indian trail can be seen climbing to a mesa top where ancient house rings are apparent to even the untrained eye. Arrowheads, metates, and pottery shards are still occasional finds. The old rail spur remains more or less intact within the ranch limits. Beyond its south gate the canyon leads to the Amargosa River; past the old paymaster's station, loading platforms, railroaders' and miners' cabins, and headframes of old mines. The ruins, and Modine Meadows with its multi-colored hills delight a shutterbug. His-

torians are interested in the fact that the canyon was a campsite for John C. Fremont's "pathfinding" expedition of 1843.

Part of the lower canyon can be driven at times by the family car, but the unpredictable nature of blowsand makes caution advisable. Additionally, at this writing, areas prohibited to vehicular access are not yet clearly defined.

First and foremost, the China Ranch is private property, and common courtesy requires a visitor to first obtain permission from its owner. Bernice Brown Sorrell, postmistress at Shoshone — and daughter of the pioneer merchant — is a co-owner of the ranch.

Likewise a true daughter of the desert, and concerned with its conservation, in her hands the future of the venerable old ranch is secure. And someday, perhaps, the ranch may reveal whatever happened to Quon Sing, who didn't have a Chinaman's chance. □

Lone Palm Oasis

by DICK BLOOMQUIST

DOWN ON THE southern flank of the Santa Rosa Mountains, the Arroyo Salado is one of the major water-courses draining Borrego's Badlands. Arroyo is Spanish for "creek" or "wash," and *salado* means "salty" or "brackish." Some maps incorrectly spell it "Arroyo Salada," in which case the feminine adjective *salada* does not agree in gender with the masculine noun *arroyo*. After rainstorms the wash's briny oozes can halt vehicular travel, for

*Pencil sketch
by author.*

then bottomless *cienagas* (marshy places) appear, immobilizing even four-wheel-drives.

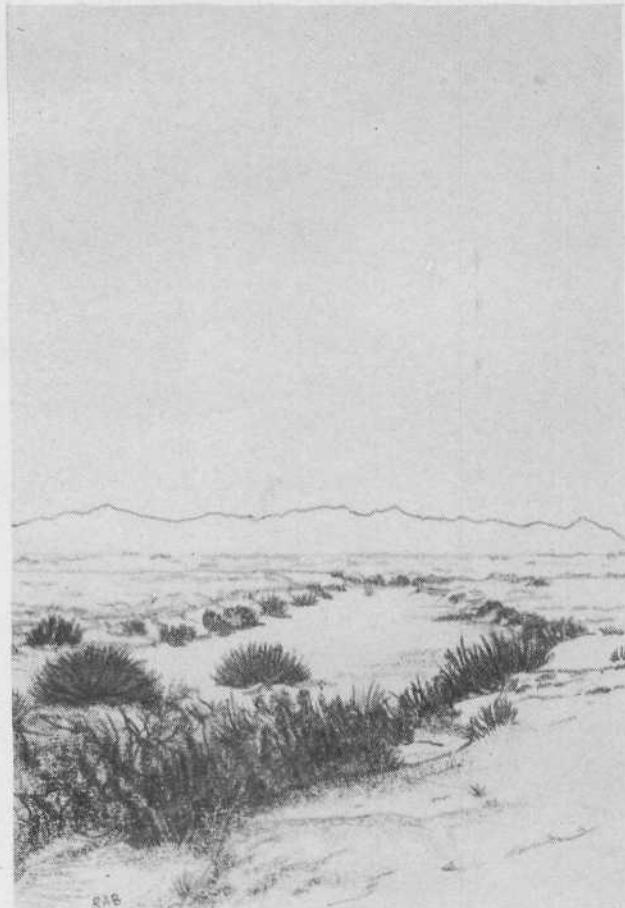
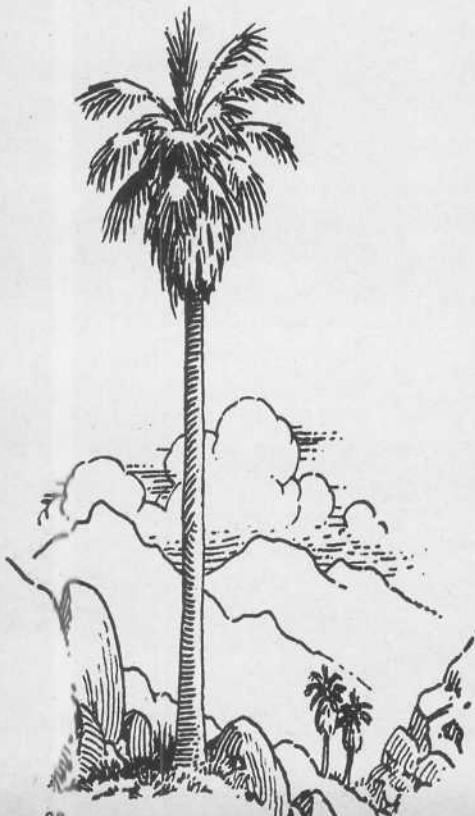
Highway 86 crosses Arroyo Salado a little over a mile south of Salton City. One warm morning in November not long after rains had moistened the desert, I drove up the sandy stream bed. Knowing of the bogs between the road and Lone Palm, I proceeded slowly, stopping now and then to study possible trouble spots ahead. All went smoothly for two and one-half miles until the "roadway" was blocked by the mud and surface water of a large *cienaga*. I turned around and parked here; the rest of the journey would have to be made on foot.

Although at times frustrating to four-wheelers, Arroyo Salado is an easy hiking route, with few rocks and little vegetation other than the alien tamarisk tree. Here and there rain water has fashioned miniature tunnels and bridges in the soft mud banks. Concretions protrude from the low walls of the wash and strew the bordering mesas. One thrusts its rounded bulk straight out from the south bank for four or five feet like an enormous truncated pipe. No one knows for sure how concretions are formed. In

the Badlands they are of sandstone, a sedimentary rock, and appear to have been built up around a nucleus. The sandstone has been cemented together, making the concretions more resistant to erosion than the surrounding sedimentary deposits.

The first *cienaga*, extending for nearly half a mile, was soon followed by a second one fringed with salt grass. Both were easily crossed on foot. Then, about one and one-half miles from my parking place, Lone Palm came into view, a stout old tree along the south side of the arroyo. Standing more than 20 feet tall, its thick, time-worn trunk poorly clothed with short brown skirts, this venerable Washingtonia has survived many a desert storm. Floods have bared its roots, undercutting time on the upstream side. The living leaves are a trifle sparse, but of a healthy green color, and a heavy crop of fruit was hanging on long stalks from the tree crown.

Although the moist ground at the oasis nurtures several small tamarisks and a clump of mesquite, no water reached the surface at the time of my visit. A brightly colored house finch chirped and sang as I wandered about.



Lone Palm is a dedicated anchorite, dwelling apart from its own kind. Its nearest kinsmen are at Four Palm Spring nearly three bee-line miles to the north. The closest Washingtonias in Arroyo Salado and its tributaries are at Seventeen Palms, about six miles west as the crow flies and more than eight miles following the winding route of the wash.

New wonders come into focus on the mesas overlooking Lone Palm: mollusk shells from prehistoric Lake Cahuilla and fragments of Indian pottery as well as more concretions and a 360-degree panorama of the spacious Colorado Desert. The Orocopia, Chocolate, Fish Creek, Vallecito, San Ysidro, and Santa Rosa ranges encircle a landscape whose vastness cannot be appreciated within the narrow confines of the wash.

Mileage Log

- 0.0 Junction of State Highway 86 and Imperial County Road S22 on west side of Salton Sea. Drive south toward El Centro on 86.
- 1.3 Highway bridge #58-13 over Arroyo Salado. Turn right (west) and drive up the wash. **Four-wheel-drive** required.
- 3.5 Pass under pole line.
- 3.8 Edge of cienaga. Wash may be impassable to all vehicles here after rains.
- 5.2 (Approximate mileage.) Lone Palm. Elevation about 20 feet below sea level.

Lone Palm, approximately 20 feet below sea level, is the lowest oasis of the 40 treated in this series. This spot once lay beneath Lake Cahuilla, whose shoreline was slightly to the west. As the lake dried up, other temporary strands came into being. Once, however, according to native tradition, the waters suddenly returned, killing many. (Arroyo Salado was very close to the boundary between the Cahuilla lands on the north and the Eastern Diegueno [Kamia] domain on the south, and I am not sure which tribe predominated here.) The Indians had settled near the fresh-water sea, building brush huts anchored with circles of rock. A few of these ancient house rings can be seen near the arroyo today; beside some of them lie bones of fish which were consumed at least 500 years ago.

A tributary of Arroyo Salado holds our next oasis, storied Seventeen Palms in the heart of the Badlands, a remote grove rich in legend and romance. □



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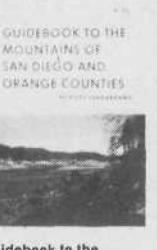
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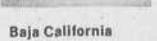
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What's Cooking on the Desert?

by STELLA HUGHES

Chili!

MANY SOUTHWESTERN dishes call for chili—and it's worth the trouble to find the real thing. The Santa Cruz Valley in southern Arizona is noted for growing the finest long green chili in the country. The Rio Grande Valley in New Mexico, as well as the coastal area around Oxnard, California, also grow fine green chili.

Green chilies are harvested in late summer in the southwestern valleys of Arizona and New Mexico. They are ready for picking when nice and firm, dark green and from six to eight inches long. Great strings of it (*ristras*) can be dried by hanging in the full sun and when crisp and brilliant red, are ready for storing in a dry place for the winter, or for years.

Green chilies can be kept fresh by refrigeration, or roasted, peeled and frozen. They can be home canned by using a pressure cooker. Chili rellenos, made from fresh green chilies, roasted in

an oven (or over the flame of a gas burner), steamed in a hot wet cloth and peeled, are a real taste-treat. However, most modern cooks use canned chilies. Canned green chilies are very good and are readily obtained in any southwestern grocery store. If you are a purist and want to start from scratch, remember to wear rubber gloves when working with any kind of chilies.

There are other varieties of chili peppers besides the long green. Jalapenos are a short, stubby, very dark green pepper and hotter than hades. Don't even pick one up without using rubber gloves! In my book, "Chuck Wagon Cookin'," in a chapter on chili, I warn the unwary reader by saying, with tongue in cheek, "Jalapenos aren't for human consumption. They are used to start charcoal fires."

Well, I received some scorching criticism from chili-loving addicts. But, I still stick by my guns and advise you to use caution and be extremely sparing when a recipe calls for green chilies. Anyone that ever makes the mistake, and buys jalapenos instead of long green chilies, will understand. It's like putting a loaded pistol to your head and pulling

the trigger—it's not a mistake you make twice.

There is another chili pepper you will see in the vegetable market, next to the long green chili and jalapenos, and that is the banana pepper. These are four to six inches long, thick fleshed and the prettiest, waxy yellow you ever saw. They turn red at maturity, but are most often canned while still yellow. They are mostly mild and three or four can be consumed at one setting without starting a two-alarm fire.

Chiletepins, or bird peppers, are little-bitty, hot devils. These are mostly found pickled in shaker bottles. Just a drop or two, from the vinegar they are pickled in, on frijoles is enough. So potent are these hot little peppers, families, during the Depression '30s, were known to use the same bottle of *chiletepins*, with fresh vinegar added as needed, for ten years. The last sauce shaken from the bottle was just as hot as when first purchased. Be that as it may, don't fish one *chiletepin* from the bottle and chew on it without a fire extinguisher at hand!

Now, we come to chili powder. The Santa Cruz Chili Co., at Tumacacori, Arizona, makes the best chili powder, in my estimation, of any in the world. It's not to be compared in any way with the concoction put out by national spice companies labeled "Chili Powder." Some of these companies ground up a little red chili, and add paprika, cumin, oregano, garlic powder, marjoram, nutmeg and allspice. So don't be fooled, and read the labels. Whether it is by Santa Cruz Chili Co., or others, it will say *pure chili powder*. Some may be lightly salted, that's all. No other spices are added.

Below is a recipe of my own for chili con carne. It is a simple way to make a main meat dish to be served with frijoles or fluffy, steamed rice. This recipe does not call for unusual spices you may not have in your cupboard.

STELLA HUGHES' CHILI CON CARNE

2 pounds of lean beef (chuck or rump), cut into bite-size pieces. Do not use hamburger.

1 large onion, chopped fine
2 cloves garlic, diced fine
1 can No. 2½ size diced tomatoes
½ cup El Pato red chili sauce or enchilada sauce
1 heaping tablespoon Santa Cruz red chili powder

1/2 teaspoon oregano
 1 teaspoon Accent
 1/2 cup vinegar
 1 rounded tablespoon brown sugar
 salt and pepper to taste
 water

Brown meat in heavy iron skillet or Dutch oven in 2 tablespoons bacon fryings or lard. When beef is nicely browned add onions and garlic. Continue cooking until onions are about half done, then add remaining ingredients.

Cook over low heat until meat is very tender. Let cook down and add hot water a little at a time to keep from sticking. Do not add thickening. Makes about six servings.

In August of 1976, I was a guest of the Smithsonian Institute during the Bicentennial Festival of American Folklife in Washington, D.C. For five days I cooked this chili con carne (using 40 or 50 pounds of meat each day) on the National Mall between the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial. Thousands of tourists formed long lines, waiting for a sample of chili con carne. Many tasted this Mexican meat dish for the first time in their lives.

CHILIES RELLENOS

(stuffed chilies)

1 tablespoon flour
 4 eggs
 8 canned green chilies
 1 pound cheese. Sharp Cheddar works best.
 1/4 cup of lard.

Make a thin batter by whipping the flour in the eggs. One end of the canned chilies will be open. Gently scrape out most of the seeds in order to reduce the heat as it is mostly the seeds that makes chili hot. Then lay the thickly sliced cheese inside the chilies. Stuff gently and do not break the long chili open. Drag each chili through the egg batter, first one side, then the other. Drain surplus batter back into the dish.

Heat lard in heavy iron skillet until very hot. Lay the chilies in it. Some cooks prefer frying one chili at a time, but all 8 chilies can be fried at once. Turn after five minutes, pour any leftover batter over the chilies, and fry for another five minutes.

ENCHILADAS

Red chili enchiladas are popular in New Mexico and Arizona and any Mexican food restaurant in the country will

Twenty to twenty-five large red pods may develop on the mature chili bush.



probably include them on the menu. This is a recipe made with the corn tortillas laid flat in the baking pan and not folded as some cooks prefer.

1/2 cup of lard
 1 large onion, chopped fine
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 2 cups canned enchilada sauce
 1 pound grated Cheddar cheese
 1 #300 can of pitted ripe olives, sliced
 12 corn tortillas

Start with two skillets, one for frying the tortillas and the other for the sauce. Fry the onion and garlic in 1/2 cup of lard until tender. Then add the sauce. Stir well and let simmer while you prepare the tortillas.

Use enough lard in the skillet to cover

the bottom about an inch deep. Have the bowl of grated cheese and the olives close at hand. Set your oven to preheat about 250 degrees. Dip each tortilla in the hot fat, let the grease drain back into the skillet, then dip the tortilla for a full 30 seconds in the simmering sauce. Lay the tortilla in a flat baking pan, cover with cheese and sprinkle olives over it. Then add a second layer of tortillas, cheese and olives, until you have used three tortillas for each serving. Use any leftover sauce by pouring over all four servings, adding the olives last. Put baking pan in the oven and as soon as the cheese melts it is ready to serve. An egg, fried sunny side up, may be added on top of each stack. □

The large red banana "Anahan" chili is a favorite type for growers. Western Ways photos.



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BACK COUNTRY ROADS AND TRAILS, SAN DIEGO COUNTY by Jerry Schad. Concentrating on the mountains and desert of So. California's San Diego County, there are trips to Palomar Mountains, the Julian area, the Cuyamaca Mountains, the Laguna Mountains, and the Anza Borrego Desert. Trips reachable by car, bicycle or on foot. Paperback, 96 pages, illustrated with maps and photographs, \$3.95.

HISTORICAL ATLAS OF CALIFORNIA by Warren A. Beck and Ynez D. Hasse. Extensive documentation and pertinent detail make this atlas a valuable aid to the student, scholar and everyone interested in the Golden State. 101 excellent maps present information on the major faults, early Spanish explorations, Mexican land grants, routes to gold fields, the Butterfield and Pony Express routes, CCC camps, World War II installations, etc. Hardcover, extensive index, highly recommended, \$12.50.

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ILLUSTRATED SKETCHES OF DEATH VALLEY AND OTHER BORAX DESERTS OF THE PACIFIC COAST by John R. Spears. Originally published in 1892, Spears was the first professional writer to visit, photograph and write about Death Valley. Until now, only an occasional copy of the first scarce edition was available. This book, long considered cornerstone literature of regional history, is still an important work of source material. Heavy, slick cover, 226 pages, illustrated, \$7.95.

LAS VEGAS [As It Began — As It Grew] by Stanley W. Paher. Here is the first general history of early Las Vegas ever to be published. The author was born and raised there in what, to many is considered a town synonymous with lavish gambling and unabashed night life. Newcomers to the area, and even natives themselves will be surprised by the facts they did not know about their town. Western Americana book lovers will appreciate the usefulness of this book. You don't have to gamble on this one! Hardcover, large format, loaded with historical photos, 180 pages, \$12.50.

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MINES OF THE SAN GABRIELS by John W. Robinson. Various districts are described such as the San Fernando and the Santa Anita placers, the gold mines of the Soledad region and Lytle Creek, as well as the lode mines on the upper San Gabriel River and on the slopes of Mt. Baldy. The Los Angeles County ranks among the top gold producers in the state, all of which comes from the San Gabriels. Paperback, illustrated, 72 pages, \$2.50.

THE LIVES OF DESERT ANIMALS IN JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL MONUMENT by Alden H. Miller and Robert C. Stebbins. An indispensable source and guide for everyone with an interest in the desert life of Southern California. In addition to the actual faunal analysis of 141 resident animals of the desert, there are 149 illustrations including 74 photographs, 58 black and white drawings, 9 maps and 8 color plates. Hardcover, 452 pages, \$28.50.

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GHOSTS OF THE ADOBE WALLS by Nell Murbarger. A reprint of Arizona history by one of the desert's outstanding reporters. Old mines, towns, army posts, people and areas are reborn into vivid life by an expert writer who knows her areas and subjects. With handy locator maps and many photographs. Paperback, \$7.95.

SOVEREIGNS OF THE SAGE by Nell Murbarger. A collection of previously told tales about the people and the places of the great American Southwest by the original author, a longtime reporter of the desert. Many photographs, some of them now lost, several excellent Norton Allen Maps. Paperback, \$7.95.

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MINES OF JULIAN by Helen Ellsberg. Facts and lore of the bygone mining days when Julian, in Southern California, is reported to have produced some seven million dollars of bullion. Paperback, well illustrated, \$2.50.

MINES OF THE EASTERN SIERRA by Mary Dedecker. The story of those mines located on the eastern slope of the great Sierra Nevada and in the arid stretches of the Inyo Mountains. Included are stories of mystery mines, such as the Lost Gunshot and the Lost Centert. Photos, maps, paperback, 72 pages, \$2.50.

WM. B. ROOD & RANCHO DE LOS YUMAS by Harold and Lucile Weight. For the first time the three adventurous lives of this man from Illinois are correlated. He was a Death Valley 49er Jayhawk; he mined in California and ranched south of Tucson; became a legendary figure after his stand-off of a circle of Apaches. He finally built his adobe on the huge Colorado River ranch. Photos, maps, portrait. Paperback, \$1.50.

Letters to the Editor

Letters requesting answers must include stamped self-addressed envelope

Loves DESERT and Reptiles . . .

As a relatively new subscriber, I must congratulate you on such a fine magazine. Just wish I had known of it years earlier.

It is quite obvious that the majority of subscribers are interested in rockhounding, mining and antiques; but I'm curious to know if there are other readers who have a keen interest in wildlife, especially reptiles and amphibians? As an amateur herpetologist (over 15 years) and shutterbug, I have a strong interest and love of the desert of which reptiles are a major feature.

I'm most anxious to hear from other readers who are seriously interested in observing in the wild, keeping or photographing reptiles. Also those photographers who would like to exchange desert slides. Interested persons are invited to write me at 1524 Russell Ave., Santa Rosa, Calif. 95401.

Many thanks for the fine animal features of past issues and I hope to see more, especially on reptiles.

DANNY MELLO,
Santa Rosa, California.

DESERT "Terrific" . . .

Thank you for a terrific magazine — we eagerly await each issue.

We try to take at least one trip a month that is in DESERT. We have metal detectors, so always take them along. Never found much, but it gets us out for exercise and meeting people.

LOIS CRUVER,
Redlands, California.

Following Clues . . .

I read with great interest the article in the December 1977 issue of *Desert Magazine* by Dick Bloomquist entitled, "New Clues to the Lost White Papoose Mine." Not so much to hunt for the mine, but to see if I could locate his guide points to the tanks.

I have lived on the low desert for years and jeeped most of the washes around the Salton Sea, yet I never knew there were sheep tanks in Palm Wash.

So, on March 4, 1978, Bob, Flora and myself decided to see if we could follow Dick's clues and find the inscriptions and tanks. We followed his directions and located the Palms

Calendar of Events

This column is a public service and there is no charge for listing your event or meeting — so take advantage of the space by sending in your announcement. We must receive the information at least three months prior to the event.

JUNE 3 & 4, Marin Mineral Society's 9th Annual Show, "Silver Jubilee of Gems," celebrating 25th Anniversary. Marin Civic Center Exhibition Building, San Rafael, Calif.

JUNE 3 & 4, Open House and Plant Sale by the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society, Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego, Calif. Free admission. Information: Elizabeth Athy, (714) 469-7647.

JUNE 3 & 4, 12th Annual Rockhound Round-Up sponsored by the Rockatronics Gem and Mineral Society, 8500 Fallbrook Ave., Canoga Park, Calif. Exhibits, dealers, demonstrations. Free admission and parking.

JUNE 3 & 4, Riverside Gem and Mineral Society's 10th Annual Show, Alesandro Jr. High School, Indian at Dracea Sts., Sunnymead, Calif. Twelve miles east of Riverside on Highway 60. Admission free.

JUNE 17 & 18, Lassen Rocks and Minerals Society's 6th Annual Show, Jensen Hall, Lassen County Fairgrounds, Susanville, Calif. Exhibits, Dealers. Tailgating, space for trailers and campers (no hookups). Free admission to exhibits.

and the North Fork. The first part of North Fork was good jeeping, but the last half mile or more was rough going. This winter's storms really washed in lots of boulders. I bent my front bumper and punched a hole in my gas tank, but we went as far as possible which turned out to be very close.

We walked until we found the inscriptions "Gold," and it was a thrill to find "H.D. O'Neil—Water—and March 9, 1889." That was almost to the day 89 years ago.

We found the tank at the waterfall and the next two up the steep wash. They were all full of water due to our heavy rains. We did not see any sheep tracks, but did see coyote, bobcat and bird tracks at the tanks. We took pictures of everything for our memoirs.

The whole trip was a thrill, but it does raise some questions. Who was H. D. O'Neil? Why was he there on that date? Was he hunting the "Lost White Papoose Mine" or just prospecting? I wonder if anyone has ever done any research to see if they could determine who he was and why he was there on that date? If anyone knows the answers, would they please send them in to this column so that we can read it.

FRANK E. CORWIN,
Salton City, California.

JULY 4, Laws Railroad Museum Celebration, Bishop, California. Music, entertainment, barbecue. Sponsored by the Bishop Museum and Historical Society. Adults \$1.00, children 50c.

JULY 15 & 16, Reno Gem and Mineral Society's Annual Show, Centennial Coliseum, 4590 S. Virginia St., Reno, Nevada.

SEPTEMBER 23 & 24, Centinela Valley Gem and Mineral Club's "Harvest of Gems" show, Hawthorne Memorial Center, El Segundo Blvd., and Prairie Ave., Hawthorne, Calif. Dealers, displays, demonstrations, prizes. Ample free parking.

SEPTEMBER 23 & 24, 38th Annual Show of the Los Angeles Lapidary Society, "March of Gems" at the Brentwood Youth House, 731 South Bundy, south of San Vicente. Dealer space filled.

SEPTEMBER 23 & 24, Carmel Valley Gem & Mineral Society, Monterey Co. Fairgrounds, Monterey, Calif. "19th Jubilee of Jewels." Dealer space filled.

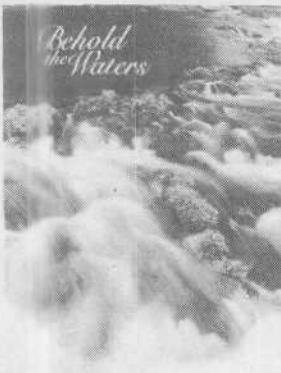
SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 1, "Nature's Jewel Box," sponsored by the Napa Valley Rock & Gem Club, Inc., Napa Town and Country Fairgrounds, 575 Third st., Napa, Calif. Dealers, demonstrations, drawings. Donation 50c. Easy parking and camping facilities on the grounds.

OCTOBER 7 & 8, Mohave County Gemstoneers 8th Annual Gem and Mineral Show. Mohave County Fairgrounds, Kingman, Ariz. Dealers. Chairman: John Sourek, Kingman, Arizona 86402.

OCTOBER 14 & 15, Annual Show "Rock Trails West" sponsored by the Campbell Gem and Mineral Guild, Santa Clara County Fairgrounds, San Jose, California. Dealers. Chairman, Ralph Quain, Box 552, Los Gatos, California 95030.

OCTOBER 14-22, 3rd Annual Gem and Mineral and Handcraft Hobby Show, Sportsman's Club of Joshua Tree, 6225 Sunburst, Joshua Tree, California. For information, write P. O. Box 153, Joshua Tree, Calif. 92252.

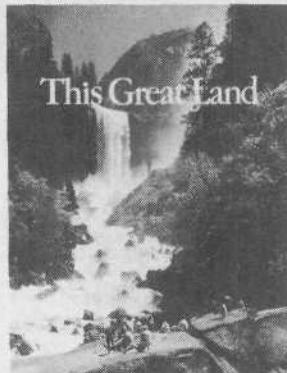
OCTOBER 28 & 29, Convair Rockhounds' Annual Show; 1978 San Diego County Gembooree, "Earth's Hidden Treasures." Al Bahr Shrine Temple, 5440 Kearny Mesa Rd., San Diego, California. Retail Dealers and Wholesale Room. Programs scheduled daily.



Behold the Waters



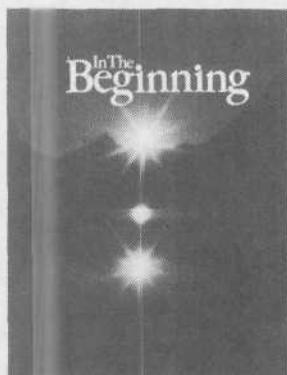
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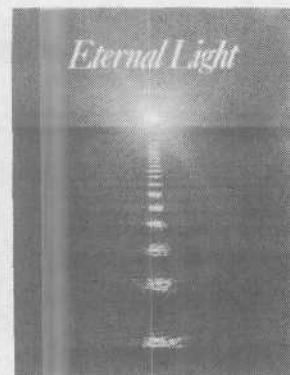
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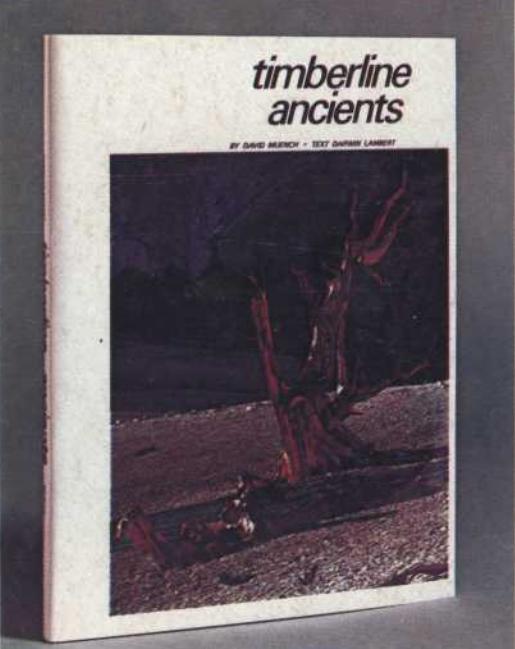
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